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Biography.

THE BIOGRAPHY OF SAMSON.

THE biography of Samſon is deſerving of attention; not ſo much on account of his piety and prudence, as diſplaying the deſtructive conſequences of a connexion with wicked, unprincipled women. The remarks of Solomon on this ſubject are impreſſively exemplified in the life and death of Samſon. Every misfortune in life and its premature termination may be traced to his miſplaced confidence and injudicious connexion with that claſs of females *who hunt for the precious life.* His conception and birth were announced to his parents by an angel. The deſign of Providence in raiſing up Samſon ſeems to be, not to exhibit a correct example for the imitation of poſterity, but in that barbarous age and divided nation, to check, by ſingular exploits and perſonal ſtrength, the encroachments of the Philiſtines. Both the virtue and civilization of Iſrael ſeem at this inauſpicious period at the loweſt point of depreſſion. Uncultivated and divided they could derive but little advantage from the dictates of political wiſdom. Perſonal courage and ſtrength are the beſt qualifications in a chief who muſt fight the battles of a diſperſed, broken people. In the death of Joſhua, the Iſraelites loſt their father, guide and defence. In a ſhort time after, they were convulſed with internal diviſions and civil diſſenſions. A mutual jealouſy ſeems to have ſubſiſted between the different tribes, and all means of defence were neglected. The conſequence of which was, they fell a prey to the ſurrounding nations. Theſe ſavage hordes poured in upon them like the northern barbarians upon the Roman empire, and ſettled themſelves in their country. In this depreſſed, divided ſtate, little was done, for many ages, effectually, to prevent theſe barbar-

ous incurſions. The efforts of one valiant chief, with his few adherents, could oppoſe no laſting barrier againſt the depredations of increaſing multitudes. It was neceſſary that the whole number and ſtrength of Iſrael ſhould be united under one head, ſucceſsfully to oppoſe their numerous invaders. The highly democratic ſtate of that people placed ſuch an event at a great diſtance. While their leaders had authority but for the moment, and the command only for the occaſion, little could be done for the public defence. He who delivered them from Egyptian bondage did not forget them; but through the period of four hundred years, raiſed them up occaſional deliverers, who by their perſonal efforts meliorated their ſervitude, and ſometimes raiſed them to a temporary independence.

Samſon was one of theſe occaſional deliverers, whom Providence brought forward to relieve the burdens of his choſen people when in a ſtate of entire ſubjugation to the Philiſtines. That form of government preſcribed by Moſes ſeems through this period to have been unorganized. This form recognized the high prieſt as the ſupreme head of the nation, under God. In this period, they ſeem to have had no high prieſt; therefore no conſtitutional head, under whom the energies of the nation could be concentrated and called forth. In the time of Samſon, the nation was ſo divided and depreſſed, that his own preternatural ſtrength and courage were the only allies which he could bring againſt the common enemy. Without an army to command, he was an hoſt himſelf: and for his victories he was indebted to no human power but his own.

Samſon was declared a Nazarite by the angel who announced his conception; that is, one conſecrated, or deſignated to a particular work. While we believe his divine deſignation, ſuch belief impoſes no neceſſity for vindicating in all reſpects his religious character. St. Paul, by adverting to Samſon as one influenced by the great principle of faith, has ſanctioned his character as a good man. Still his biography will diſplay his imprudence. The childhood and youth of Samſon are paſſed over in ſilence; and the firſt occurrence of his life on record is his marriage with a woman of Timnah. Notwithſtanding the remonſtrances of his father, he proceeded to form this inauſpicious connexion, which procured him only diſappointment and mortification. This woman, being a Philiſtine, retained all her national prejudices, which were diſcovered at the marriage feaſt, by revealing to her countrymen the riddle propoſed by her huſband. As he went up to ſolemnize this unfortunate marriage, he found a cluſter of bees in the carcaſs of a lion which he had before ſlain. This incident furniſhed him with an enigma, which he propoſed on a wager to the ſagacity of his marriage gueſts. The ſtipulated period in which it was to be unravelled had now nearly elapſed. Deſpairing of their own ſhrewdneſs, they addreſſed themſelves

ſelves to the bride, expecting more ſucceſs from the importunity and tears of a deceitful woman, than from themſelves. She, by practiſing thoſe female arts which have impoſed on better men, obtained the ſecret, and communicated it to her countrymen.

To pay his forfeiture, Samſon had recourſe to his preternatural ſtrength, and went to a village of the Philiſtines and ſlew thirty men, and took their raiment and diſcharged his engagement. This ſingular tranſaction loſt him his wife, and involved him in a laſting contention with the enemies of his country. Little indeed could he expect from a connexion, contrary to the expreſs law of God; and it would ſeem that he would not have connected himſelf with one equally the foe of his country and religion. But how common is it to ſee ſenſible and we hope pious men, forming ſuch connexions as reſt upon no reciprocity in age, education, manners or religion. Such connexions are peculiarly unfortunate, not to ſay criminal in miniſters of religion. Inſtead of being a help meet for them, ſuch companions are a perpetual embarraſſment in all the miniſterial functions. The mere want of piety in ſuch a caſe is a calamity. A chill is diffuſed through all the devotions of the family; and its pernicious effects will be felt even in the deſk.

If Samſon was a pious man, he was the less pious for his female connexions: and indeed they were the ſources of all his misfortunes. The harlot's lap is a dreadful place for a good man; for *ſhe hath caſt down many ſtrong men wounded.* When Samſon found himſelf denied all intercourſe with his wife, he undertook a general vengeance on her countrymen by conſuming their ſtanding corn with fire. This ſingular mode of retaliation ſo excited the indignation of the oppreſſors of his country, that they came down and wreaked their vengeance on his wife and her family, conſuming them all with fire; probably concluding them acceſſories with Samſon.

His laſt female connexion, which was formed among the enemies of his country, proved both to him and the Philiſtines the moſt unfortunate. By this time, Samſon's preternatural ſtrength was univerſally known and dreaded. To diſcover in what it conſiſted, and how it might be impaired, were diſcoveries of the higheſt importance to the ſafety of their country, and even to the ſecurity of their lives. They had experienced the moſt deſtructive effects from the moſt contemptible weapon when wielded by his nervous arm. He had left the moſt laſting impreſſions on the minds of his enemies, of the danger of provoking ſuch a foe, while poſſeſſed of his reſiſtleſs might. When, therefore, Samſon made his addreſſes to Delilah, her countrymen, knowing that her character correſponded to the import of her name,* embraced the occaſion with avidity to obtain through the ſolicitation of his miſtreſs the important ſecret. When ſhe ſuppoſed him ſufficiently attached, as one intereſted in all his circumſtances, ſhe ſolicited him

to

* Deceiver.

to impart to her, his bosom friend, a secret which she should be as much concerned to keep as himself. For a time he stood firm, and resolutely denied her request. Had he continued to do thus; had he not descended to specify methods by which he might be overcome, though these methods were only pretended, to gain a moment's respite from the wearisome importunity of a treacherous woman, he would not have fallen a sacrifice to female artifice. The danger of playing with the serpent is impressively displayed in the dreadful consequences of Samson's trifling with this artful woman. Finding that he condescended to name expedients, and that he did not name to her the real methods of reducing his strength, she could plead against him his want of truth and sincerity. By naming even a false expedient, he committed himself, and conceded to her peculiar advantages to effect his destruction. After every expedient had failed, she had recourse to the harlot's last resort, supplication and tears. These obtained her the victory, and he imparted all his heart. From his frankness, she was persuaded he had communicated the secret. She therefore sent to the Philistines, requesting their attendance only once more: assuring them that his communications might be improved to effectuate his ruin, and rid themselves of a destructive foe. Their attendance was promptly given; and that they might be ready to fall upon their debilitated foe, they were secreted in her chamber. With the blandishments of the serpent when he facinates the silly bird, and draws it into his poisonous jaws, so she persuades him to sleep in her lap, as a place of perfect security: As the deceitful crocodile can affect the voice of commiseration and distress, and then convert himself into a seat for the weary traveller, who, while refreshing himself, is unexpectedly swallowed up by his deceiver. The harlot's lap is as fatal as the serpent's tooth, or the voracious jaws of the crocodile. While Samson enjoyed, as he imagined, the caresses of a sincere friend, he was the dupe of the most deceitful and treacherous woman. While wrapped in sleep, she, whose hands are as bands and snares, applies the fatal shears, and separates from his head those locks on which his preternatural strength depended. She, with the voice of pretended anxiety for his safety, exclaims, "Sampson, the Philistines be upon thee." He awoke unconscious of the change. Even good men are not immediately sensible of the dreadful consequences of sleeping in the harlot's lap. They, like Samson, may feel no immediate diminution of their strength, but they never fail to become an easier prey to surrounding enemies. Perhaps one important design of Samson's history is to display the danger of sinful indulgence. To this end it is certainly well adapted. The man who takes one wrong step, is propelled almost irresistibly to take a second, and third, and fourth. So headlong is the downward road. No sin, perhaps, is attended with consequences so fatal to present peace, and with so little

little hope of future reformation as a connexion with a licentious woman. *Her houſe is* emphatically *the way to death, and her paths take hold on hell. None who go unto her return again, neither take they hold of the path of life.* When the harlot had taken Samſon in her ſnare it became eaſy for the Philiſtines to put upon him their fetters of braſs. When ſhe had blinded his underſtanding and heart, it was eaſy for his enemies to put out his eyes and lead him a helpleſs captive to the dungeon. Oh, Samſon, how art thou fallen! fallen by the arts of the harlot. Is not her end bitter as wormwood, and ſharp as a two-edged ſword? While the Philiſtine armies trembled at thy name and exploits; while heaps of ſlain marked thy ſteps, thou haſt fallen, not on the bloody field, not contending for the liberties of thy country, but thou haſt fallen, and fallen ingloriouſly by ſleeping in the harlot's lap! Well may the uncircumciſed triumph. *Our god*, ſaid they, *has delivered our enemy and the deſtroyer of our country into our hand.* Dagon muſt have the glory, and coſtly ſacrifices muſt be offered to his divinity. But they had no need to introduce Dagon. There was no knot in the degradation and ruin of Samſon worthy of a deity to untie. All was a matter of courſe, following his connexion with an inſidious, profligate woman. A day was appointed to render public thanks to their divinity. The greatneſs of the occaſion brought a numerous throng of Dagon's devotees, who crowded his temple. To heighten the ſatisfaction of the day, Samſon is produced and placed in ſuch a ſituation that the worſhippers might ſee this once reſiſtleſs foe in a ſtate of captivity and blindneſs. And perhaps Dagon himſelf might ſmile to ſee Iſrael's champion led in chains to his temple, as a trophy of his power. If Dagon derived no pleaſure from ſeeing a degraded foe, yet ſurely his worſhippers did: *Samſon made them ſport.* His indignant feelings were excited by his mortifying ſituation. Though he could not ſee the pointed finger, he could hear over his head the loud, contemptuous laugh. Samſon was permitted to lean againſt the pillars on which the temple ſtood. Deſirous once more to avenge himſelf on the enemies of his country, he calls on Iſrael's God, to inſpire him with ſtrength equal to the great occaſion. He then bowed himſelf with all his might, and *ſaid, Let me die with them.* Inſtantly the enormous pile, with thouſands who filled it, fell to the ground, and under its cumbrous ruins buried Samſon with a multitude of Dagon's worſhippers: *So that thoſe whom he ſlew at his death were more than thoſe whom he ſlew in his life.* Thus cloſed the ſingular life and exploits of Samſon who had judged Iſrael twenty years.

Theſe biographical remarks will lead to the following obſervations.

1. That no ſtrength of body or mind can ſecure a man againſt the conſequences of folly and imprudence. The loſs of virtue is the loſs of every thing. No endowments of body or mind can enſure

ſure peace and happineſs without prudence. Samſon's ſtrength was no ſecurity when he gave up himſelf to vagrant deſires, and to the direction of an unprincipled woman. Men of the greateſt talents and virtue have been unable to prevent the ruinous effects of ſin and imprudence. Not the ſtrength of Samſon, nor the virtues of David, nor the wiſdom of Solomon could prevent the evil conſequences of their criminal connexions. Some ſins are more directly productive of ruin in this world than others; and experience has determined that no vice is more immediately connected with ruin than Samſon's. *The adultreſs hunteth* for the precious life, and often indeed has this coſtly ſacrifice been made to her by the man void of underſtanding. The government of God forbids the expectation of final impunity in the practice of any ſin; and the preſent delay of puniſhment is not even a preſumptive argument againſt its taking place in ſome future period even in this life. Samſon's connexion with the harlot of Gaza was the firſt and ſtrong link in that chain of cauſes which dragged him a blind, helpleſs captive to the temple of Dagon.

2. The importance of virtue and ſincerity in a female connexion is impreſſively diſplayed in the hiſtory of Samſon. No ſubſtitute for theſe in a female has ever been found. The court and ball room have proclaimed their reſpective powers in forming the female mind and manners to render her *all accompliſhed* without virtue and ſincerity. But obſervation has ſhown that theſe ſchools only furniſh her with more poliſhed weapons for conqueſt and ruin. The charm of the ſerpent, while it renders him more pleaſing, makes him the more dangerous. No talents, nor accompliſhments in a female, are worth poſſeſſion without a virtuous heart. The man who fondly calls them his own will probably, when too late, lament the phantom which he has embraced. Had Eve maintained her virtue Adam had not fallen.

AGATHOS.

Religious Communications.

BRIEF SURVEY OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY, IN A SERIES OF LETTERS TO A STUDENT IN ——— UNIVERSITY, BY HIS FATHER.

Letter V. *Century* IV.

Continued from page 212.

My dear Son,

HAVING paſſed in review the principal events which happened to the Chriſtian church, during the third century, thoſe of the fourth century will now claim your attention.

In

In the beginning of this century, the church enjoyed an agreeable calm. But this tranquil ſtate was of but ſhort continuance.

Diocleſian, the Roman emperor, ſtrongly ſolicited from various quarters, to take an active part againſt the Chriſtians, was at length prevailed upon to iſſue an order to pull down their churches; to burn all their books and writings; to deprive them of all their civil rights and privileges, and to render them incapable of any civil honours, or promotion. This decree, although it did not extend directly to the lives of Chriſtians, yet it proved fatal to many of them; particularly to thoſe who refuſed to deliver the ſacred books and records, in their poſſeſſion, into the hands of the magiſtrates.

Not long after this, a fire breaking out in the palace of the emperor, he was perſuaded into the belief that the Chriſtians were the cauſe of it. He accordingly iſſued an edict, by which vaſt numbers of them were puniſhed and tormented in the moſt inhuman and infamous manner. Other enormities were alſo attributed to the Chriſtians, of which they were innocent. This produced a new edict againſt them, ordering all the biſhops and miniſters of the Chriſtian church to be caſt into priſon. This, not ſatisfying their cruel and unrelenting perſecutors, a third edict was ſoon iſſued, by which it was ordered that the moſt inſupportable torments ſhould be inflicted, to force theſe venerable captives, theſe ſupporters of the Chriſtian church, to renounce their religion and to do homage, by ſacrifices, to the heathen gods. Severe and cruel as were theſe proceedings, they did not produce the deſigned effect. They, however, deprived the church of great numbers of its moſt ſtable pillars and brighteſt ornaments.

Soon after this horrible perſecution, a fourth edict was publiſhed by the ſame emperor, Diocleſian, by which the magiſtrates were commiſſioned and required to compel all the Chriſtians, without diſtinction of rank or ſex, to ſacrifice to the heathen deities. They were authoriſed, in the execution of their commiſſion, to employ all ſorts of torments in order to drive them to this act of apoſtaſy from the Chriſtian faith.

The diligence of the Roman magiſtrates, in the execution of this inhuman decree, reduced the affairs of the Chriſtians to the moſt diſtreſſing ſituation; and it had proved fatal to the Chriſtian cauſe, were it not that there was One to protect it, who is higher than the higheſt earthly potentate. Chriſt was the guardian of his own church, and the protector of his own cauſe.

In this diſtreſſed ſituation of the Chriſtians, divine Providence was preparing for them more ſerene and happy days. That God, who maketh the wrath of man to praiſe him, and who changeth the times and ſeaſons, was pleaſed to put the Roman empire into a ſtate of tumult and convulſion, which ſoon terminated in the elevation of Conſtantine, ſurnamed the *Great*, to the imperial dignity.

Although

Although this emperor had hitherto diſcovered no religious principles of any kind, he now openly embraced Chriſtianity, in conſequence, it is ſaid, of a *miraculous croſs* which appeared to him, in the air, as he was marching towards Rome with an army to attack Mexentius, one of his rivals. That Conſtantine really ſaw this croſs, in the air, about noon day, he moſt ſolemnly declared; nor does the reality of this extraordinary viſion appear to be doubted by very reſpectable and judicious writers on the ſubject, But whether this wonderful phenomenon, admitting the truth of its appearance, was the only occaſion of Conſtantine's converſion to Chriſtianity, does not admit of ſatisfactory deciſion.

During the former part of Conſtantine's adminiſtration, Licinius, another emperor, ſhared with him in the management of public affairs. This circumſtance operated, in ſome degree, unfavourably to the Chriſtians. But after the death of Licinius, Conſtantine had the ſole direction of affairs. Under his auſpicious adminiſtration the Chriſtian cauſe made rapid progreſs.

This zealous prince employed all the reſources of his genius; all the authority of his laws; all the engaging charms of his munificence and liberality, to deſtroy the ſuperſtition and idolatry of paganiſm, and to propagate the glorious doctrines of the goſpel in every part of his widely extended empire.

Conſtantine, at his death, left three ſons, who were put into poſſeſſion of the empire. They all followed the example of their father in abrogating idolatry, and in accelerating the progreſs of the Chriſtian religion throughout the empire.

After the death of the ſons of Conſtantine the great, Julius Conſtantius, who is generally known by the name of Julian, the apoſtate, was placed at the head of the empire. This emperor, although he had been educated in the Chriſtian religion, apoſtatized from it; became its bittereſt enemy, and uſed his utmoſt endeavours to reſtore pagan ſuperſtition and idolatry to its former credit among his ſubjects. By art and ſtratagem, he endeavoured to undermine the church. He took away the privileges which had been granted to the Chriſtians by his predeceſſors, ſhut up the ſchools of learning, and encouraged ſectaries and diviſions.

This Julian, as before obſerved, had been educated a Chriſtian. Of courſe the prediction of our Saviour, Luke xxi. 24; was, it cannot reaſonably be doubted, known to him: "Jeruſalem ſhall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;" that is, Jeruſalem ſhall not be rebuilt, until the Gentile world ſhall be converted to the Chriſtian faith. Julian, acquainted with this prediction of Chriſt, and wiſhing to bring the Chriſtian religion into contempt, and expoſe its Author to deriſion, by proving the prediction falſe, encouraged the Jews to rebuild the temple at Jeruſalem. But no ſooner had they ſet about this great work, than they were forced to deſiſt; for while they were removing

removing the rubbiſh to lay the foundation of the building, formidable bolts of fire, iſſuing from the ground with dreadful noiſe, diſperſed both the works and the workmen. In addition to this, repeated earthquakes filled the ſpectators of the ſurpriſing ſcene with terror and diſmay. This ſignal and miraculous event is atteſted in a manner which renders the evidence of its truth irreſiſtibly convincing. Thus was this impious apoſtate confounded by his own devices.

The ſucceſſors of Julian, in this century, were profeſſors of the Chriſtian religion. And notwithſtanding Chriſtians, from various cauſes, ſuffered perſecution, and were ſubject to ſeveral embarraſſments, yet the moſt vigorous and effectual meaſures were taken by the emperors, particularly by Theodoſius the great, to extirpate heathen ſuperſtition and idolatry, and every where to ſpread and extend the triumphs of the Redeemer's croſs. The effect was, that towards the cloſe of this century, paganiſm had greatly declined, and the religion of Jeſus became proportionably eſtabliſhed.

As to the ſtate of literature and ſcience, in this century, but little can be ſaid to its advantage. However, ſeveral branches of ſcience were cultivated both by Chriſtians and heathens, yet but few attained to any conſiderable diſtinction in literary fame. Eloquence, poetry, hiſtory, &c. were far from being ſtudied and improved to the degree they were in the Auguſtan age, or at the time of our Saviour's birth. The philoſophy of this period was principally the Platonic, or that of which Plato was the founder. It was a ſtrange medley of wiſdom and folly. With reſpect to the Chriſtians of this period, it is to be obſerved, that however they were, in many inſtances, illiterate, they, in general, applied themſelves with more zeal to the ſtudy of the liberal arts, than they formerly had done. And to the honour of the Roman emperors it is to be mentioned, that, in this period, they greatly exerted themſelves to excite and maintain a ſpirit of literary emulation among the profeſſors of Chriſtianity. For this purpoſe ſchools were eſtabliſhed in many places. Libraries were alſo erected, and men of learning and genius were encouraged and rewarded.

As to the government of the church, it is to be obſerved, that, although the alterations introduced into it were not great, yet they were ſuch, as to prove not a little injurious in their effects to Chriſtianity. Conſtantine, the great, aſſumed to himſelf the ſupreme power over the church, and the right of modelling and governing it in ſuch a manner, as he ſhould judge moſt conducive to the general good. The people, however, retained and exerciſed their right in chooſing their own teachers; and the biſhops or miniſters of churches managed, in a good degree, the eccleſiaſtical affairs of their reſpective diſtricts, in council, with the preſbyters or inferior officers; yet with due regard to the ſuffrages or votes of the whole of the people. In

In this century, *œcumenical councils* were eſtabliſhed. In theſe councils, deputies or repreſentatives from every part of the Chriſtian world aſſembled, to conſult upon the general intereſt of Chriſtianity; to paſs ſuch laws and to eſtabliſh ſuch cuſtoms, as ſhould be deemed moſt conducive to the benefit and proſperity of the church. However well intended theſe councils might have been, and however beneficial they might be, if duly regulated, certain it is, that they laid the foundation for much of that controverſy, and of thoſe warm and unhappy debates, which, in after times, greatly diſturbed and agitated the church.

The biſhops or miniſters of ſeveral churches, particularly thoſe of Rome, Antioch, Alexandria, and Conſtantinople, were elevated to a rank and authority above their brethren. And, indeed, the authority exerciſed by many of the biſhops, or miniſters, operated unfavourably to the rights and privileges of the ſubordinate officers in the church, and to thoſe of the private members in general. This power of the clergy continued to increaſe, and was ſo uſed that, towards the cloſe of this century, the ancient government and diſcipline of the church underwent a very great revolution.

The authority of the biſhop of Rome appears to have been ſuperior to that of the biſhops of any other cities. This aroſe from the coincidence of ſeveral adventitious circumſtances; and it is to be obſerved, that, in this century, ſeveral of thoſe ſteps were laid, by which the biſhops of Rome afterwards mounted to the ſummit of eccleſiaſtical power and deſpotiſm. Nor is it to be diſguiſed that, with the increaſe of power, many of the biſhops, particularly thoſe of large cities, became poſſeſſed of wealth and an unreaſonable ſhare of civil honours and advantages. Theſe, in many inſtances, did not fail of producing various kinds of luxuries and vices unbecoming the Chriſtian character, and eſpecially the character of the miniſters of the meek and humble Jeſus.

But notwithſtanding theſe evils, many of the clergy were men of diſtinguiſhed piety, learning and zeal. Several among them were famous for their writings. Among theſe, were Euſebius, Athanaſius, Baſil, Chryſoſtom, Epiphanius, &c.

The fundamental principles of the Chriſtian religion were preſerved, until this century, in a great degree of purity. But now it began to be very conſiderably corrupted. Nor did the corruption remain ſtationary, but greatly increaſed. Extravagant veneration was paid to departed ſaints; and the belief of a purgatory, or a certain fire, deſtined to purify departed ſouls, began to prevail. The Chriſtian worſhip was loaded with gaudy and oſtentatious rites and ceremonies. Frequent pilgrimages were undertaken to the holy land, or the land of Judea; and to the tombs of the martyrs. Quantities of earth or duſt were brought from the holy land by the pilgrims, and handed about from one to another, as the moſt powerful remedies againſt the aſſaults of wicked

wicked ſpirits, &c. This holy earth or duſt was ſold and bought every where at enormous prices. Such was the power of ſuperſtition, and of zeal without knowledge.

From theſe facts it will eaſily be perceived, that while in ſome reſpects the church realized advantages from the peace and proſperity ſecured by Conſtantine, in other reſpects it received great detriment. No ſooner were Chriſtians every where protected by this emperor, and the greateſt advantages conferred upon them, than they began to be "exalted above meaſure, and become vain in their imaginations." Their attachment to, and zeal for the purity of the goſpel ſuffered great diminution. In his beſt eſtate, how vain is man!

Many were the errors, in doctrine or ſentiment, which crept into the church towards the cloſe of this century. To enumerate them, or the controverſies which they occaſioned, would be tedious. Of the many errors which infeſted the Chriſtian church, and which proved highly injurious to its real intereſt, I ſhall, in this place, mention but two. The firſt of theſe was, *that it was an act of virtue to deceive and lie, when, by that mean, the intereſts of the church might be promoted.* The other was, *that errors in religion, when maintained and adhered to, after proper admonition, were puniſhable with civil penalties and bodily tortures.*

When we caſt an eye upon the lives and morals of Chriſtians, or thoſe who bore the Chriſtian name, at this period, we ſhall obſerve a mixture of good and evil; ſome, eminent for their piety; others, infamous for their crimes. The number, however, of immoral and unworthy profeſſors began ſo to increaſe, that the examples of diſtinguiſhed piety or godlineſs became, comparatively, very rare. At the cloſe of this century, the church, notwithſtanding its limits were greatly extended, was awfully overſpread with moral darkneſs.

The religious rites and ceremonies uſed in the church, during this century, were numerous. The appendages of public worſhip were very pompous and ſplendid. Gorgeous robes and mitres, wax tapers and proceſſions, images, and gold and ſilver veſſels, and many ſuch circumſtances of pageantry were to be found in Chriſtian churches, as well as in heathen temples. Indeed, many of the rites of the Chriſtian worſhip were better adapted to pleaſe the eye and ſtrike the imagination, than to kindle in the heart the pure and ſacred flame of devotion. Feſtivals and holidays were greatly increaſed. But theſe days, ſet apart for religious exerciſes, were, by multitudes, ſhamefully ſquandered away in indolence, voluptuouſneſs and criminal purſuits. Salt began now to be uſed in the adminiſtration of baptiſm as a ſymbol of purity and wiſdom. With this view it was thrown into the mouth of the baptiſed perſon. The ſubjects of baptiſm were alſo anointed immediately before and after the ordinance was adminiſtered; and after admiſſion

miſſion into the church, they were required to be clothed in white garments, for the ſpace of ſeven days. Many other ſuperſtitious rites and ceremonies were adopted, with the recital of which I will not trouble you.

The diviſions and controverſies in the church were not leſs numerous than the rites and ceremonies. Many were the debates among Chriſtians with reſpect to the Trinity, which were carried on with great heat, and with many words, without much light or knowledge. The Arian doctrine originated in this period, by Arius, a man of a ſubtle turn, and of diſtinguiſhed eloquence. The leading ſentiment in this doctrine was, that Chriſt was a created being, and therefore inferior to the Father, both in *nature* and in *dignity*. This ſentiment of Arius, concerning the character of the Son of God, was accompanied and intimately connected with ſeveral other ſentiments, which claſhed with thoſe which were commonly received by Chriſtians.

The opinions of Arius, ſoon after they were divulged, were embraced and advocated by great numbers in the Chriſtian church; particularly in Egypt and in the neighbouring provinces. This circumſtance excited much alarm among thoſe who were oppoſed to the Arian hereſy. Warm and violent diſputes aroſe. At the head of the diſputants were Arius on the one ſide, and Athanaſius on the other. At length a general council was convened by the emperor Conſtantine, to ſettle the diſputes. The reſult of this council was the condemnation and baniſhment of Arius. This deciſion, and the execution of it, excited ſuch diſturbance and tumult among the Arian party, that the emperor thought proper ſoon to recal Arius from baniſhment, and to reſtore him to his former rank and office. This event gave ſuch ſtrength to the Arian party, that the reſult was the depoſing and baniſhment of Athanaſius, the head of the Trinitarian party. Hence aroſe perpetual animoſities and ſeditions, treacheries, plots, and open acts of violence and injuſtice between the two contending parties. Council was aſſembled againſt council, whoſe jarring and contradictory decrees ſpread perplexity and confuſion throughout the Chriſtian world. This leading controverſy occaſioned the riſe and ſpread of a great variety of diviſions and hereſies, which were attended with many immediate unhappy conſequences, and paved the way for others, which proved highly injurious to the Chriſtian cauſe.

Having briefly exhibited to your view the moſt remarkable occurrences which happened in the Chriſtian church, during this century, I will detain you but a few moments longer with ſeveral brief remarks.

Whence happened it, that the Chriſtians, in the beginning of this century, under the reign of Diocleſian, were ſo frequently perſecuted and ſo cruelly entreated; that the moſt vigorous exertions

ertions were made to demoliſh their churches, to deſtroy their ſacred writings, and to compel them to renounce the Chriſtian faith? &c. Were thoſe Chriſtians peſtilent citizens, diſturbers of the public peace, or diſloyal ſubjects? Had they embraced a religion whoſe tendency it was to produce diſorder and confuſion in ſociety, or to injure either the individual or the community? Were their ſacred books and records chargeable with any ſeditious deſigns or purpoſes? or did they contain any doctrines, precepts and inſtitutions, unreaſonable and ſuperſtitious? In all theſe particulars, the reverſe was indeed the truth. The general character of the Chriſtians, at that period, was diſtinguiſhed for regularity of habit, and peaceable ſubmiſſion to government; and their ſacred books contained no doctrines, precepts or inſtitutions, but ſuch as were "juſt to God and ſafe for man;" none but ſuch as were eminently calculated to diffuſe univerſal benevolence among men. Yet were theſe Chriſtians and their religion the object of the moſt inveterate malice and rancour to the world around them. They were hated; they were perſecuted; they were martyred on account of their religion, and their religion was hated on account of its purity and divine excellence. How awful is the depravity of the unſanctified heart! How horrible its character! The ſcripture ſpeaks but the language of truth and ſoberneſs when it aſſures us, that natural or unrenewed men are filled with all unrighteouſneſs; that the poiſon of aſps is under their lips; that their feet are ſwift to ſhed blood; that deſtruction and miſery are in their ways. Surely madneſs muſt be in their hearts, and their minds enmity againſt God, againſt his cauſe, and againſt every thing that is ſpiritually good. How deformed, how ſhocking is this delineation of unſanctified nature! But to whom does it apply? Excluſively to individuals of "the baſer ſort," or excluſively to the idolatrous heathen? Are we, my ſon, or are any who are denominated Chriſtians, better than they? "No, in no wiſe." Such, *by nature*, is *our* character. By nature we are all children of wrath; children of diſobedience; enemies to God and to the croſs of Chriſt. "We are hateful and hating one another." "As in water face anſwereth to face, ſo does the heart of man to man." The character of an individual wicked man is the character belonging to the whole ſpecies. The viſible difference in the external character of the wicked does not ariſe from any radical difference as to the inner man of the heart. *Here*, every imagination is *only evil continually*. If in a former letter I have made remarks ſimilar to the foregoing, you will not, I truſt, conſider this repetition of them as needleſs or unimportant. It is of the laſt importance that you ſhould form correct ideas of the nature and extent of ſinful depravity; that you ſhould know and *feel* yourſelf to be "exceedingly ſinful," as otherwiſe there can be no hope of your repentance and reconciliation to God, if yet you remain in the bonds of iniquity.

iniquity. O my ſon! it is my heart's deſire and prayer to God, that he would, in mercy to your ſoul, teach you the plague of your own heart; that he would cauſe you to accept the puniſhment of your iniquity, and make you a meet ſubject for his heavenly kingdom.

Does not the preſervation of the Chriſtian ſcriptures, and of the Chriſtian church from deſtruction, when every exertion of malice, of authority, and of power was made to effect their deſtruction, clearly evince, that thoſe ſcriptures were from Heaven, and under the ſpecial protection of the great Head of the church? and that the church itſelf was firmly eſtabliſhed on the Rock of everlaſting ages? What but the ſpecial providence of God could have preſerved the one or the other, under the circumſtances which have been mentioned? Have we not the moſt plenary evidence that the holy ſcriptures are indeed a revelation from Heaven, and that their glorious light will never be extinguiſhed? That the church of Chriſt is ſo eſtabliſhed, that the gates of hell will never prevail againſt it? To doubt in either of theſe caſes would betray that infidelity, which is utterly unbecoming the Chriſtian character.

The extraordinary converſion of Conſtantine the great, through the inſtrumentality of a miraculous croſs exhibited to his view in the air, at mid-day, (admitting that event to have taken place) will lead you to reflect, that the Holy One of Iſrael is not limited in his operations, or in the means by which he carries into effect the purpoſes of his grace. For the accompliſhing of theſe purpoſes he employs whatever means or inſtruments he ſees fit. Theſe in the conviction and converſion of ſinners may be either extraordinary and miraculous, or ordinary, and in appearance even the moſt weak and contemptible. Means or inſtruments to accompliſh theſe purpoſes are, for the moſt part, perhaps invariably uſed; but in ſelecting them God acts as a ſovereign. In endeavouring, then, to aſcertain whether we, or others, are the ſubjects of the renovating grace of God, it is of but little, if of any conſequence to inquire, what was the inſtrumental cauſe of awakening and ſerious impreſſions upon the mind. The great inquiry ſhould be, what is the nature, and what are the effects of thoſe impreſſions? I would however ſuggeſt, whether ſuppoſed converſions, occaſioned by any extraordinary means, or accompanied by very ſingular circumſtances, are not, generally, of a more doubtful nature, than thoſe which take place through the inſtrumentality of more ordinary means, and are accompanied with no very extraordinary and marvellous circumſtances? From well authenticated facts, and from perſonal obſervation, I do not heſitate to decide in the affirmative. But whatever be the means employed in accompliſhing the purpoſes of divine grace in the converſion of ſinners, thoſe purpoſes are effected by no other agency, as the efficient cauſe, than that of Him who worketh all and in all. The greatneſs and the excellency

lency of the power is of God. He worketh according to the counſel of his own ſovereign will and pleaſure, and none can let, or hinder him. The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice.

While you contemplate the defeat of Julian, the apoſtate, in his attempt to rebuild the temple at Jeruſalem, by the miraculous and viſible interpoſition of Heaven, are you not ready to conclude that he muſt have repented of his apoſtaſy from the Chriſtian faith? that he muſt have been firmly reeſtabliſhed in this faith, and become its zealous friend and protector? It ſhould ſeem that theſe muſt have been the effects of that truly wonderful event. But this was far from being the caſe. He ſtill remained an apoſtate, and a bitter enemy to Chriſt and his cauſe. So averſe are they to the truth, as it is in Jeſus, that the apoſtate wicked will not come to the light, nor open their eyes to the light, although it ſhine like the ſun in his meridian ſplendour. Such is the perverſeneſs and obſtinacy of their hearts, that no event, however wonderful or miraculous, is capable of removing the one or ſubduing the other. To the accompliſhing of theſe purpoſes, the exertion of the almighty power and all conquering grace of God is indiſpenſably requiſite. This indeed is neceſſary to the ſubduing of the hearts of all wicked men to the cordial reception and acknowledgment of goſpel truth; but it ſeems, in ſome views, peculiarly neceſſary to this purpoſe, with reſpect to apoſtates from their Chriſtian profeſſion. *They*, of all men, who have once been enlightened with reſpect to the great and diſtinguiſhing doctrines of our holy religion; who have had an impreſſive and alarming ſenſe of their ſinful and ruined condition, and who have *apparently* taſted that the Lord is gracious, *become* the bittereſt enemies to *experimental* religion and the diſtinguiſhing doctrines of grace, when they apoſtatize from their *ſeemingly* good beginning. There is but a gleam of hope, that ſuch characters will ever be brought to ſaving repentance. How aggravatedly criminal is their conduct! How dangerous, how awful their condition!

The increaſe of power and of privileges, which happened to the miniſters of religion in this century; the decline of their morals, in many inſtances, and the unhappy and bad effects thence reſulting, furniſh a uſeful and inſtructive leſſon. It is but reaſonable to infer from theſe events, that man is naturally prone to licentiouſneſs; to tranſgreſs the preſcribed limits of moderation and juſtice, and to the exerciſe of domination and tyranny; and, therefore, to prevent theſe evils, it is neceſſary that he ſhould be carefully guarded againſt the poſſeſſion of undue privileges and lawleſs power, and that he ſhould be checked by many and ſtrong reſtraints. Nothing but a renewed temper of heart will reſtrain any one of Adam's race from the exerciſe of unfeeling and brutal tyranny, or from greedily running into every exceſs of wickedneſs, if poſſeſſed of adequate power, and of the means of exerciſing it; nor will

will the reſtraints of religion *alone*, in all ordinary caſes, be a ſufficient check. How important, then, is it to their own good, the welfare of ſociety, and the intereſt of the Chriſtian cauſe, that miniſters of the goſpel ſhould be barred againſt the aſſumption and exerciſe of exorbitant power, ſuperfluous wealth and improper privileges. But may not evil ariſe, and much, every way, from the oppoſite extreme? While the miniſters of Jeſus may with much propriety make the excellent prayer of Agur their own—"Give me neither poverty nor riches," would it not be a happy circumſtance, would it not be a reaſonable ſervice in their people, *practically*, to ſay, Amen?

How affectingly, how greatly to its reproach, is the character of the Chriſtian church developed by the effects produced from the peace and outward proſperity, which it enjoyed under the reign of Conſtantine the great! Until this period, all the Roman emperors had been heathen idolaters; and the perſecutions and diſcomfitures, which the Chriſtians realized from them, had frequently been very great and diſtreſſing; yet the Chriſtian religion, in a high degree, retained its beautiful ſimplicity unadulterated; and, in a high degree, the church remained uncorrupt. The morals of Chriſtians were, in general, pure and unimpeachable. But now, when under the protection of a Chriſtian emperor, they were exalted to heaven in point of privileges, civil, as well as religious, behold, the glorious ſplendour of the Chriſtian religion begins to ſuffer a moſt melancholy obſcurity! The proſperity of Chriſtians began to deſtroy them. Corruption in opinion and corruption in morals began awfully to prevail. The ſimple truths, doctrines and inſtitutions of the goſpel were eſteemed by multitudes as "light food." The ſincere milk of the word was not palateable. The great and precious things of religion were lightly eſteemed, and mercies, in general, were ſhamefully abuſed. Nor did *real* Chriſtians wholly eſcape this pernicious contagion. Even they, in too many inſtances, luſting for the fleſh-pots of Egypt, diſcovered a very cenſurable propenſity to return to their former degrading bondage. How often is that goodneſs of God, which ſhould lead to repentance, excite the livelieſt emotions of gratitude, and conſtrain to the moſt cheerful obedience, improved as the occaſion of oppoſite effects! How generally is it the caſe, that the ingratitude and licentiouſneſs of man, riſe in proportion to the bleſſings beſtowed upon him! Like Jeſhurun, he is peculiarly prone to wax wanton, and contemptouſly to rebel under the enjoyments of the peculiar bounties of Divine Providence. Under the reception, then, of ſuch bounties, does it not become us to rejoice *with trembling*, leſt we ſo abuſe, as to convert them, eventually, into the greateſt curſe? O God of mercy! ſuffer us not to turn thy grace into wantonneſs.

Can

Can you, my ſon, guard with too much vigilance againſt that pernicious maxim which, by many, was advocated in this century, "that it was a virtue to lie for the intereſt of the church," or of religion? Can you view the doctrine otherwiſe than highly unreaſonable, abſurd, and impious? You cannot I am perſuaded have ſo diſhonourable a view of the Chriſtian religion, or of its glorious Founder, as to believe its intereſt, in any degree, dependent on lying or prevarication. But were it true that this expedient, if reſorted to, would be inſtrumental to the higheſt intereſt and proſperity of the Chriſtian church, or our holy religion, this circumſtance could, in no degree, juſtify the practice. It would no more extenuate the criminality of lying, than did the infinitely glorious effects reſulting from the crucifixion of Chriſt, extenuate the crime of Judas in betraying, or that of Herod, Pontius Pilate, and the wicked Jews, in condemning him to death. We may never do evil, that good might come.

And now, my dear ſon, ſolemnly enjoining it upon you always to ſpeak the truth from your heart, and to read this lengthy communication with all the attention which its importance demands, I fervently commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which are able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are ſanctified.

N——E.

To be continued.

THE SOUL OF MAN COMPARED TO A SHIP.

TO communicate ſpiritual truth, by the help of metaphors, is a mode of inſtruction, in which the pages of inſpiration are exceedingly rich. A metaphor is a ſimile compriſed in a word. We are juſtified by ſcripture, in comparing the ſoul to a ſhip. In Hebrews vi. 19, it is written, "which hope we have as an anchor of the ſoul." Anchors are made for ſhips. If the ſoul, therefore, has an anchor, the ſoul muſt be a ſhip, in a metaphorical ſenſe. If, then, we conſider the ſoul of man in the ſimilitude of a ſhip, the ſimilitude muſt be extended. Ships are made to ſail on the ocean. Life is the ocean on which the ſouls of men are ſailing. Eternity is the country towards which they ſail, and heaven the port to which they are profeſſedly bound. The whole intereſt of man depends on the ſucceſs of the voyage. The metaphor, thus opened, is peculiarly grand and ſolemn. It preſents a celeſtial port, which it behooves every ſoul to make, becauſe it is the only place in the univerſe, where peace and felicity will forever reign. It preſents a dangerous ocean to navigate, before the

haven can be made. It preſents innumerable ſouls, like ſo many ſhips, afloat on the ocean of life, and thouſands, every day, launching from the ſhores of nonexiſtence. When theſe ſhores are once left, there is no return. Some parts of theſe ſhores are near thoſe of eternity, others more remote; ſo that ſome finiſh their voyage in a few days, or even hours, while others are toſſed on the deep for many years. Since we are all on the dangerous ocean of life, as the millions before us have been, and millions unborn muſt follow, it may be intereſting to illuſtrate ſome points of analogy between the ſoul and a ſhip.

1. A ſhip is a ſtriking exhibition of the invention and ingenuity of man. The ſoul is a wonderful diſplay of the power and wiſdom of the Creator.

To examine the form, contexture, qualities and powers of the human body, is enough, it might ſeem, to extort, even from the atheiſt, the exclamation of the Pſalmiſt; "we are fearfully and wonderfully made." How then muſt we be aſtoniſhed, when we contemplate what little we know of the human ſoul! It is an active, thinking, conſcious, immortal exiſtence, far ſuperior to the body. It is one of the nobleſt productions of creative power, formed in the intellectual image of the Creator. It is capable of deep and intricate reſearch, of ſublime contemplation, of pure and exquiſite enjoyment. It can compaſs the world, trace the order of ſyſtems, meaſure the planets, and ſoar above the ſtars. It can derive inſtruction from minute particles and inſects, and draw treaſures of knowledge from the earth and the ſea. It is furniſhed with a diverſity of paſſions and affections, as complicate as wonderful. Theſe, as a perfect ſyſtem, were in the utmoſt order and harmony, till ſin, like a blazing comet, changed their courſes, and filled the ſyſtem with diſorder and ruin. The ſoul, deſtroyed by ſin, is like the world in chaos, without form and void. But, though in ruins, like a ſtupendous wreck, it diſplays the power and ſkill of the great Artificer. What a beautiful diſplay, therefore, of divine power and wiſdom, as well as ſovereign grace, is a ſoul *renewed!* How perfect and glorious will be the exhibition, when every diſorder of the renewed ſoul ſhall be rectified, the diſcordant paſſions attuned to uniſon, and the current of affections ſhall run in their proper channels towards God, the ocean of love and holineſs.

2. A ſhip is very coſtly, and therefore very valuable. The value of a ſhip is equal to the price with which ſhe may be purchaſed. There is nothing in the univerſe, which can be purchaſed, ſo coſtly, and therefore ſo valuable, as the ſoul. Its value may be correctly eſtimated, by the price paid for its redemption. When a ſhip is captured and condemned by an enemy, ſhe muſt be either abandoned or redeemed with a price. Souls are fallen into the hands of the great enemy. They are under the dominion of

of ſin, led captive at the will of Satan, and condemned to deſtruction by the holy law of God. The ranſom is great; but not too great for Jeſus, the friend of ſouls, to pay. "Ye are bought with a price;" the price of blood; not of a mere creature, but the blood of God. The church is "the flock of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own blood." A ſhip, though valuable, may be redeemed with money; but the ſoul is redeemed, "not with corruptible things, as ſilver and gold, but with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world." Could captive ſouls have been redeemed with ſilver and gold; had the world been an equivalent; nay, were all creation enough to meet the demand of juſtice, Chriſt might have paid the ranſom without ſhedding his blood; for the world and all things are at his diſpoſal. But no; theſe would do nothing toward ſatisfying the demand of the law. The demand is infinite. The price, therefore, muſt of neceſſity be infinite. But the price is paid. The infinite ſacrifice is actually made! The incarnate God has ſhed his blood. The demand is cancelled, and liberty proclaimed to captive ſouls. Here we ſee the true value of the ſoul. What ineſtimable worth! It outweighs creation! "What therefore will it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and loſe his ſoul;" for "what can he give in exchange for his ſoul?" Reader, have you ſuch an infinite treaſure? If you loſe it, you are ruined forever! How ſolicitous, therefore, ought you to be for its ſecurity!

3. Ships are uſually profitable to their owners. They are made and uſed for the owners' advantage. Thus the ſoul is not only made *by* God, but *for* him. "The Lord hath made all things for himſelf." He claims the ſoul as his peculiar property. "Behold, all ſouls are mine!" Hence, all the faculties of the ſoul ſhould be employed to promote the intereſts of God's holy kingdom. But, alas! how do men pervert and debaſe their noble faculties, while they employ them in the ſervice of the adverſary, againſt the welfare of Zion! Nevertheleſs, ſince the Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice; for he will cauſe even the wrath of man to praiſe him. Veſſels of mercy and veſſels of wrath will each, in different ways, ſhow forth the glory of the great Creator.

4. A ſhip, however good her upper works and rigging, without a ſound bottom, is eſſentially defective and unfit for ſea. She may make a handſome appearance, and yet have a rotten hull. She may ſail tolerably well while the ſea and winds are favourable, and there is nothing to wrench and try her. But no ſooner do the heavens gather blackneſs, the rains deſcend, the winds blow, the billows riſe, and the ſurges break over her, than the crazy bottom trembles and gives way; the ſhip, with her treaſure, is ingulfed in the bowels of the deep.

What

What a ſtriking repreſentation of formaliſts and hypocrites! They have a fair exterior, and appear beautiful to men, while their foundation is defective, totally unfit to ride out the ſtorm which will try mens' ſouls. The upper works and rigging of the ſoul, i. e. the profeſſions, the government of the paſſions, and the viſible deportment, may make an excellent appearance; and, in the gentle current and gales of proſperity, the ſoul may ſeem rapidly to advance towards the celeſtial haven. But this port cannot be reached without the experience of boiſterous weather and a rough ſea, on a dangerous coaſt. It is the coaſt of eternity, and every ſoul muſt paſs through the ſtraits of death, which are narrow, dark and ſtormy. Souls may approach theſe ſtraits with full ſail and flying colours; but there the ſun is ſhut in; the moon and ſtars diſappear; the heavens are clothed in darkneſs and horror; fear, like a torrent, overwhelms them; the tempeſt of remorſe vehemently beats; the billows of divine wrath riſe and break over them; the law thunders and lightens ſo as to ſhake the foundations of the deep; the whirlpool of deſpair roars between them and the ſhore; the rotten hull gives way; the ſoul ſinks down and is ſeen no more!

O, how important is it to build on Chriſt!

Reader, pauſe, and conſider! Never truſt your ſoul on the old, corrupt bottom of the natural heart. You may make good profeſſions, maintain a fair outward character, be honeſt, charitable and unſpotted in your lives, without building on Chriſt. You may appear beautiful to men, who ſee only what is above water, and yet be totally deſtitute of that holineſs, without which no man can ſee the Lord.

5. A ſhip, in order to be a good ſailor, and fit for the maſter to dwell in, muſt often be externally and internally cleanſed. The ſoul muſt undergo the ſame. In ſailing through the impure ocean of life, the ſoul contracts many hurtful things which impede its progreſs. The native filthineſs of the heart, and that contracted from the world, are very great. There is filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit. If any man cleanſe himſelf from theſe, he ſhall be a veſſel of honour, and fit for the maſter's uſe. There is a fountain for ſpiritual waſhing. Precious fountain! Jeſus waſhes his people from their ſins in his own blood. Reader, are you ſenſible of your pollution and conſtant need of cleanſing? Do you find pride, ſelfiſhneſs, unbelief, impenitence, worldly-mindedneſs and ingratitude cleaving to your ſouls and impeding their progreſs towards heaven? Let your prayer be, "Waſh me," O Lord, "and I ſhall be clean."

6. A ſhip, in order to be navigated acroſs the tempeſtuous ocean, requires an able, experienced maſter. Many a ſhip is loſt merely through the ignorance or negligence of the maſter. The

ſoul

ſoul requires juſt ſuch a maſter as Jeſus Chriſt. It is requiſite that the maſter of a ſhip ſhould be acquainted with the ſhip herſelf. Chriſt has a complete knowledge of all the powers and faculties of the ſoul. He knows its weakneſs and ſtrength, its ſize and capacity, what it is capable of receiving and enduring. A ſhip maſter muſt be acquainted with all the rules of navigation, and know, in every caſe, how to apply them to the proper management of the ſhip.

There is not a circumſtance in the ſoul's paſſage over the ocean of life, with which Chriſt is not perfectly acquainted, and he is able to deliver from every difficulty. Chriſt has a perfect knowledge of the ocean, and ſees every temptation and danger that await the ſoul in its paſſage to eternity. He can alſo command the billows, and they obey him. He can huſh to calmneſs the wrath of man and malice of Satan, when they riſe in angry ſurges and threaten to overwhelm the ſoul. When the ſoul approaches the coaſt of eternity, it ſtands in peculiar need of his ſkill and direction. There millions are daſhed, and broken, and loſt. That coaſt is every where dark and dreadful, but at the celeſtial port. How important, that we all have Jeſus for our maſter! But, alas! how many precious ſouls are floating on the ocean of life, which Chriſt has never entered and will never own!

7. A ſhip never goes to ſea without a compaſs. The ſoul's compaſs is the word of God. Without a compaſs, a ſhip would loſe her courſe. Without the word of God, the ſoul would never make the heavenly port. This is an infallible chart, as well as compaſs. But how lamentable, that ſo many are haſtening to eternity, under the direction of carnal reaſon, while the ſure word of God is little known, and leſs regarded!

8. A ſhip is ſometimes *becalmed*. When the wind ceaſes to blow, the ſhip makes no progreſs. So, when the gentle gales of God's Spirit are withholden, the ſoul makes no progreſs heavenward. A ſhip, without wind, is a uſeleſs thing: So is a ſoul without the influences of the Spirit. Reader, if you have ever felt the ſweet influences of the Holy Ghoſt in your ſoul, you know how painful and melancholy it is to lie in a dead, ſpiritual calm.

9. A ſhip at ſea is ſurrounded with danger. So is the ſoul on the ſea of life. It is expoſed on one hand, to the Sylla of preſumption, and, on the other, to the Carybdis of deſpair. It is often covered with the furious waves of ſin, driven by the tempeſts of affliction, and ſometimes toſſed on the rough ſwelling ſurges of paſſion, while neither ſun nor ſtars appear. Satan, with all his piratical forces, is cruiſing in queſt of plunder. He ſhoots his fiery darts at the ſoul, and, were not the Captain of ſalvation able to vanquiſh the fiend, he would overcome and lead it captive. But painful is the belief, that moſt ſouls are already in the poſſeſſion of the prince of darkneſs. Chriſt is able to pluck them out of his

his hand. Ah! the fate of thoſe he will not reſcue. The ocean he can change to a lake of liquid fire, and raiſe an eternal ſtorm of wrath, to overwhelm both Satan and all his captive crew in remedileſs deſtruction.

Let every ſoul take Jeſus for his captain, the word of God for his compaſs and chart, grace for ballaſt, divine promiſes for proviſion, hope for his anchor, an obedient will for his rudder, and, with the wind of the Spirit, he will outride all the ſtorms of life, and gain the haven of eternal reſt.

COGNATUS.

THOUGHTS ON ACTS *ix.* 11.

Behold, he prayeth.

IS Saul of Tarſus on his knees? Is that infuriate monſter, who *breathed out threatenings and ſlaughter againſt the diſciples of the Lord*, a ſupplicant at the feet of Jeſus? Is that blood-thirſty butcher, who ſpread terror and deſtruction to the utmoſt of his power, ſlain, as to the enmity of his heart, laid proſtrate on the earth, praying for mercy, and crying, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*

Surpriſed by the heavenly viſion, which informed him of the ſtrange event, Ananias might have uttered his ſurpriſe in ſimilar exclamations. Awaked from his ſlumbers with mingled emotions of joy and fear, belief and incredulity, he heard the meſſage, and replied, *Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy ſaints at Jeruſalem; and here he hath authority from the chief prieſts to bind all that call on thy name.* Well might the pious diſciple be filled with pleaſing aſtoniſhment. The Spirit revealed to him a wonderful thing. The information was prefaced with *behold! Behold, he prayeth!* A marvellous ſight! The champion of perſecutors in ſo humble a poſture! Did not the angels ſhout with joy and admiration when Saul was ſmitten to the ground?

Behold the man! A few moments ago he was boiling with fury, armed with power, and advancing with terror againſt the worſhippers of Jeſus. Suddenly, his fury ſubſides, his arms fall, he forgets his authority and commiſſion from the chief prieſts, he lays aſide the boaſted Phariſee and the learned ſcholar of Gamaliel, for the lowly worſhipper of Jeſus, and in ſuppliant attitude you ſee him imploring pardon. Triumphant grace! *We* may exclaim, *behold! Behold*, ye trembling believer, what your Almighty Saviour can do! See this memorable diſplay of his power and grace, and take courage. His arm can cruſh the ſtouteſt foe, can ſubdue the hardeſt heart, and convert the engines of hell to inſtruments of ſalvation.

Behold,

Behold, ye enemies of the croſs; ye deſpiſers of the Lamb; ye rejecters of mercy; conſider whom you oppoſe! fear to provoke his wrath, repent and cry for pardon while his wrath is withheld, leſt it overtake you in a fatal hour!

Behold, ye worldly wiſe and ſpiritually ignorant, who are lighted by ſparks of your own kindling! where was the wiſdom of Saul when it was extinguiſhed by that light which ſhone from heaven? His carnal wiſdom dictated, that he ought to deſtroy the religion and diſciples of Jeſus of Nazareth. But no ſooner did the light from heaven illuminate his ſoul, than he found himſelf a fool without excuſe.

Behold, ye formaliſt and hypocrite! if the lofty looks of that proud phariſee were brought low, in an inſtant, how muſt your ſtrong hold be pulled down! Truſting in works of the law for juſtification, he lived according to the ſtricteſt ſect of the Jewiſh religion; but no ſooner was he truly enlightened, than his prayer is, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?*

Behold, ye new-born ſouls, and learn the nature of a renovated heart! Its very breath is prayer. No ſooner does the ſoul begin a ſpiritual life, than it begins to pray.

Behold, ye diſciples of infidelity! See an evidence of the divine origin of the Chriſtian religion, which ſophiſtry and cunning can never deſtroy. The circumſtances of Paul's converſion, and of his previous and ſubſequent life, prove to demonſtration that he was a ſubject of ſupernatural and gracious influence, and that the religion he taught has the approbation of God.*

Meſſrs. Editors,

IF the "Experience of Miſs P——," ſince Mrs. M——, which was publiſhed in your Magazine, Vol. II. p. 260, was gratifying to your readers, the following extracts from a letter dictated by her a ſhort time before her deceaſe, it is preſumed will not be unintereſting. She exhibited the life of an eminently humble and pious Chriſtian, and it is our conſolation in the loſs we have ſuſtained by her death, that we cannot doubt ſhe has died the death of the righteous. Your's, ——.

V————, April 30, 1807.

Dear Brother,

"I ADDRESS you from the ſides of the grave. I am now apparently very near the world of ſpirits, as the laſt ſymptoms of my diſorder have taken place. As I am out of hopes of ever

* This subject is ably discussed by Lord Littleton in his *Converſion of St. Paul.* The reader may be amply rewarded for his labour in perusing that excellent little volume.

ever ſeeing you again in this world, I have a great deſire to ſend you a few lines, as a token of my love and eſteem for you. In all my difficulties and troubles, you have treated me with the kindneſs and tenderneſs of a father, which has knit my heart to you and your family. I hope God will reward you for all you have done for me. I owe ten thouſand talents to my friends, and have nothing to pay, but leave all my debts for my dear Saviour to pay.

God has dealt very mercifully with me, both with reſpect to temporal and ſpiritual things for a number of months paſt. I have felt almoſt a perfect calm and ſunſhine, with ſcarce an interpoſing cloud. The fears of death and the grave have for a long time been taken away, ſo that I could view, through the window, the ground where my bones are to lie, with great delight. My ſoul has, at times, been ſo ſwallowed up in the love of Chriſt, that I longed to depart, and ſee him *as he is*, and glorify his great name. About a week ſince, I had ſuch a diſcovery of the upper world, as I never had before. It ſeemed as though my mind was enlarged for a ſhort time, to view the glories and perfections of Chriſt. Never did I behold ſuch divinity in the Saviour, as now, while all the heavenly hoſts were caſting their crowns at his feet. Oh! I longed to be one of them, when I might lie low as in the duſt to praiſe him. I cannot deſcribe it to you, I can only ſay with Mr. Tennant, "It appeared glory *all unutterable.*" But I am obliged to be very ſhort in all I ſay. It is with great difficulty I can ſpeak, through weakneſs. But our heavenly Father does all things well.

I have not for ſome time heard from my dear ſiſter in the Lord, Mrs. S——. I truſt we ſhall ſoon meet in another, and happy world.

Give my dying love to the dear Society.* I hope they will not fail of aſſembling themſelves together. I believe we can all ſay, God has often made our hearts glad, when uniting in prayer and praiſe. I am glad that you ſpend a part of the time in converſing upon the ſcriptures, and think it will be more profitable than to ſpend the whole in conference.

With regard to all my terreſtrial concerns, I think I can ſay, "*Father, thy will be done.*" My laſt love to all our dear Chriſtian friends; wiſhing you and them all the bleſſings pertaining to this life, and that which is to come."

Affectionately your's, &c.

* A society of profeſſing Chriſtians, of ſeveral denominations, who ſpend one evening of every week, in conference upon the concerns of their ſouls.

RELIGIOUS

Religious Intelligence.

UNITED STATES.

THE ADDRESS AND CONSTITUTION OF THE EVANGELICAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Address to all, who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and who wish that his gospel may every where be preached to the poor.

Brethren and Friends,

A NUMBER of ministers, delegated from different associations in the counties of Worcester and Middlesex for the purpose of considering the subject, have thought it expedient to form a New Missionary Society to aid in extending the means of Christian knowledge among the destitute, or poorly provided, in the infant settlements of our own country. After repeated and deliberate consultations, and prayers to the great Fountain of wisdom for direction, we have formed, and offer to the public a constitution for such a society. The object to be effected is in itself of great importance, and we trust will interest the feelings of all the friends of Zion. To carry the benevolent design of the institution into effect we must solicit your charitable contribution. For your compliance with our request substantial reasons may be required. Such it is presumed will be suggested to your minds, when the subject is taken into your serious consideration. Did we plead the cause of those in outward poverty and distress; did we ask you to give a portion to the hungry, to cover the naked, or by your liberality to loosen the chains of the unhappy captive, or to deliver him that is ready to perish, we are persuaded you would be touched by a tender sympathy, and that your charity would afford relief. May we not, then, indulge a confidence, that you will sensibly feel for those, who may be perishing for lack of vision, who may be destitute of the means of Christian knowledge, denied the ordinances of worship, and the light of the blessed gospel? If it would afford high satisfaction to relieve the bodies of our fellow mortals, how much more to enlighten their minds, and promote the salvation of their souls! They, who desire that Christ's kingdom may be extended, and that "all men may come to the knowledge of the truth as it is in him, and be saved," can never want reasons for bestowing something to promote these great ends. Many Missionary Societies we know already exist; and the happy fruits of their labours have been seen and acknowledged. Facts, learnt by actual experiments, justify a hope of success in like attempts to propagate the gospel, and invite us to lend our aid, and to emulate the pious zeal of those, who have gone before us in the benevolent work. We pray you to reflect on the subject, and hope every one will give according to his ability. The widow's mite, the small portion bestowed by those in moderate circumstances, as well as the larger donations of the more affluent, will aid the important design, and we humbly trust will be abundantly rewarded by him, who regards the things done to his disciples on earth, as done to himself.

JOSEPH SUMNER, *Moderator.*
REUBEN HOLCOMB, } *Scribes.*
JOSEPH AVERY, }

The Constitution of the Evangelical Missionary Society.

Art. 1. THE Society shall be called the Evangelical Missionary Society in Massachusetts.

Art. 2.

Art. 2. The great object of this Society is to furnish means of Christian knowledge and moral improvement to those inhabitants of our own country, who are destitute, or poorly provided.

Art. 3. The Society shall consist of all persons, who shall subscribe this Constitution, pay two dollars into the Treasury, and the same sum annually for promoting the objects of the institution; also of such churches, as shall annually choose a member to represent them. Every subscriber will be considered as a member, until in person, or in writing, he signify to the Treasurer, or Recording Secretary, that he desires to have his connexion dissolved. Any person, who, on signing this constitution, shall advance ten dollars, or more, shall be a member without the annual contribution.

Art. 4. The officers of the Society shall be a President, a Vice President, a Treasurer, a Recording and Corresponding Secretary, and twelve Trustees, to be chosen by ballot at the annual meeting. Six of the Trustees at least shall be gentlemen in civil life. The President and Vice President shall ex officio be added to the board.

Art. 5. The duty of the President, and in his absence of the Vice President, shall be, to regulate the meetings of the society; also of the Trustees, any five of whom shall form a quorum. All meetings of the Society and of the Trustees shall be opened by prayer.

Art. 6. It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive all monies paid by the members; and all donations and collections; to keep a fair account, and to exhibit it at the annual meeting. The books and accounts of the Treasurer may be inspected by any member. The Treasurer shall give bonds to the satisfaction of the Trustees for the faithful discharge of his duty.

Art. 7. It shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary, to record the names of the members, keep accurate records of the proceedings of the Society, and exhibit them at every annual meeting. The records may be inspected by the members.

Art. 8. The duty of the Corresponding Secretary shall be to correspond with other Missionary Societies, and individuals, agreeably to the direction of the Society or Trustees; to preserve on file official communications and all papers entrusted to him, and to transcribe such as may be required by the Trustees.

Art. 9. The power and duty of the Trustees shall be, to carry into effect the design of this institution; to regulate their own meetings; to appoint a Treasurer, a Recording and Corresponding Secretary, in case of vacancy in either of those offices, or of incapacity of such officers, to serve until the next annual meeting; to require the attendance of the Secretaries to act officially at their board; to call upon the Treasurer to exhibit his books and accounts; to receipt for all monies by him received, and to pay the same to them or their order; to use and apply with economy all monies and other property; to appoint, contract with, direct, send, and recal Missionaries, Catechists, and Schoolmasters, to procure and disperse copies of the Holy Bible, other pious and useful books, and also school books; and, when necessary, to call special meetings of the Society.

Art. 10. The Trustees shall meet twice in each year, and at such other times as they shall think expedient.

Art. 11. The Trustees at every annual meeting shall report their doings in the preceding year, and propose such measures as they may deem useful and necessary.

Art. 12. This Society resolve, that no persons shall be employed as Missionaries, but such as are "sound in the faith once delivered to the saints," approved for their knowledge, prudence and piety; animated with Christian zeal, diligent in their proper calling, and ready "to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ." It is also expected, that in appointing Missionaries the preference be given to settled ministers.

Art. 13. As the design of the society is to aid similar societies in disseminating

nating "the knowledge of the only living and true God, and of Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, whom to know is life eternal," so it will ever be ready to encourage and unite with them in measures for this important purpose; to form the closest connexion with them, and if thought expedient, to have all cemented into one society.

Art. 14. All questions before the society shall be determined by a majority of the members present, except such as relate to the altering of this constitution. If any amendment be desired, it may be proposed at the annual meeting; but it shall not be adopted until the next, nor then without the consent of two thirds of the members present.

Art. 15. At every annual meeting a discourse shall be delivered in public, and a collection made. At the first meeting two ministers shall be chosen preachers, one of whom shall perform at the first stated meeting, the other at the next. At each annual meeting a second preacher shall be appointed.

Art. 16. As soon as one hundred persons shall have subscribed, a committee, selected by this convention, shall appoint a meeting of said subscribers, to ratify this constitution, to organize themselves, and to appoint the time and place where the first annual meeting shall be holden. At each annual meeting the time and place of the next shall be appointed.

Art. 17. As this society is voluntary, it is expected, that all the officers will gratuitously render their services.

JOSEPH SUMNER, *Moderator.*
REUBEN HOLCOMB, } *Scribes.*
JOSEPH AVERY, }

A Brief Account of the Proceedings of the Committee, appointed by the Yearly Meeting of Friends, held in Baltimore, for promoting the Improvement and Civilization of the Indian Natives.

Concluded from page 238.

THE committee remained several weeks amongst the Indians, during which time they visited a number of their towns and villages, at all of which they were received in the most friendly and hospitable manner.

In the course of their journey, they passed by a settlement of the *Wyandots*, at Brown's Town, or the Rock. They found that the Indians at this place, had, since the visit made by Friends, to their nation, in the year 1799, advanced considerably in agriculture; many of them having built comfortable houses, and acquired a considerable number of cattle, hogs, and other domestic animals. And they were informed from good authority, that the Wyandots, residing at Sandusky, as well as the Shawanese, on the Auglaize river, had also, since that visit, turned their attention very much towards the cultivation of their lands; they had therefore the satisfaction to remark, that the communications from the committee to these nations, and the exertions which had been made, to turn their minds to agriculture, although we had not been in a situation to extend much assistance to them, have not been altogether unavailing.

They also visited the place fixed upon for the settlement of Philip Dennis, on the Wabash river, about 40 miles southwest of Fort Wayne, and found its situation to be very advantageous for farming; the soil appearing to be equal in fertility, to any land in the western country; to this place there are also two good mill-seats adjacent: one on the Wabash, which may be improved without injuring its navigation, and the other on a stream which falls into that river, about half a mile below.

Soon after their return home, a letter was received by the committee, from the Indian agent at Fort Wayne, informing, that the Indians had held their council in the sixth month, agreeably to expectation; at which 874 of them attended; "when the written address of George Ellicott and Gerard T. Hopkins, (who it appeared had been appointed to visit the Indians on behalf

of

of the society of Friends) was produced, read and interpreted to all the different nations present." In reply to which, divers of their chiefs expressed great satisfaction; and amongst others Toethteboxie, on behalf of the Delawares, said, "for many years before I came into the world, the white people have been offering to do for us, what is now mentioned, and it appears, that our *eyes were never opened* until this time; we will now take hold of it, and receive it. I am an old man, and want to see it before I die: if I once see it, I will die in peace, to think I have left my women and children in comfort."

On the return of the Friend, who went out with the committee, and remained in the Indian country, during most of the year 1804, he informed that he spent the time agreeably with them, and was favoured to enjoy a good portion of health whilst there. He raised about 400 bushels of corn, besides a quantity of turnips, potatoes, cucumbers, water melons, pumpkins, beans, parsnips, and other garden vegetables, which he directed to be divided amongst the Indians on their return from their hunting camps; and left with the family of Indians, with whom he resided, upon the farm he had cultivated, 23 hogs and pigs, seven of which were in good order to kill, and he expected would weigh fifteen hundred pounds; these he engaged the agent to attend to the killing and salting of. They were small when brought to the farm in the spring, and had no other food than what they gathered in the woods.

With some assistance, which he obtained from Fort Wayne, he cleared and enclosed under a substantial fence, twenty acres of ground, and built a house, thirty two feet long and seventeen feet wide, a story and a half high, with floors and partition.

He further informed, that the Indians, who remained with him, were very industrious, and attended to his directions; the young women wished to work in preparing the ground and in tending the corn; from this he dissuaded them: and as some spinning wheels had just arrived at Fort Wayne, which had been sent on by government, he encouraged them to go there, and learn to spin and knit, of a white woman who happened to be at that place; this they did, and soon learned both to spin and knit; *and he left them knitting yarn of their own spinning*, when he came away.

He also informed, that a considerable number of Eel River and Weas Indians were about to settle near the place he cultivated; and that previous to his departure, he was with several of their principal chiefs, who requested him to tell Friends, that they, and the Indians generally, were much obliged to them for the assistance they had given them, and hoped we would continue our friendship towards them, and that nothing might happen to discourage us.

All the Indians he was amongst were very friendly; as was also the agent and other officers of the government.

As it appeared that the Indians were very desirous of Friends continuing their care towards them, and of our sending a person to take the place of Philip Dennis; after weightily considering the subject, it was concluded to endeavour to procure a suitable Friend for that purpose; but none offering to engage in the service, and the committee taking into consideration the low state of their funds, and the advanced season of the year, together with the dissatisfied and unsettled situation of the Indians at that time, on account of a sale of land made by some of the tribes to the United States,* thought it might, for the present season, be best to write to the agent, and request him to procure for us, the most suitable character in his power, who, under his direction, would plough the land Philip Dennis cultivated the last season,

* *The uneasiness which this circumstance occasioned amongst the Indians has since been entirely removed.*

season, and plant it in corn: in the performance of this, we hoped he would be assisted by the Indians. We also observed, that after their corn was planted, we were willing to believe *they* would be able to manage it themselves; should a second ploughing however be necessary, we directed this also to be done. This person was also desired to prepare for them a garden of the most useful vegetables, which *they* might afterwards easily manage.

The committee have since received his answer to this letter, in which he says, "he will lose no time in complying with their request, and that he will at all times be ready to put the benevolent concern of Friends, towards the Indians, in execution." He also says, "that at this time, a spirit of industry exists amongst the Indians generally; and that, as several of the tribes had requested of government to have a part of their annuities expended in the employment of men to split rails, and make fences for them; the Delawares had twenty three thousand rails put up into fences, the last winter; and that forty thousand more would be made into fences for the Miamie and Eel River Indians, by the first of the sixth month." He adds, "that ten families of the Miamies have settled adjoining the place cultivated by Philip Dennis, and that four men were employed in making rails to fence in forty acres for them; also, that three persons more were at work for the Eel River Indians, a half a mile below Dennis' station; that they had twenty five acres cleared and ready for the plough, and he expected would have fifty or sixty acres fenced in by the first of the sixth month." He further adds, "that he expects at least twenty five families of Indians will remove to reside at that place the present season, and he is confident the settlement will increase very fast. The Indian who worked during the last season with Philip Dennis, was about building himself a comfortable house, had cleared two acres more of ground, and was ploughing the field previously cleared by Philip Dennis: the hogs which were left there with him, had increased to one hundred in number."

The agent further informed, "that there would be one hundred acres of land under good fence, at the Little Turtle's Town, (eighteen miles north of Dennis's station) by the first of the sixth month, where they had also obtained a large number of hogs, and some cows, and he doubts not, but that the Indians will soon see, that it is easier to *raise* food, than to procure it by hunting," and adds, "Friends may see, from the great progress they have made in civilization, since Philip Dennis was with them, that they only want good and suitable men to reside amongst them, and teach them how to work."* Notwithstanding

* *Since this narrative was prepared for publication, a letter has been received from the agent at Fort Wayne, dated the 5th of the tenth month,* 1805, *in which he says, "agreeably to the directions of the committee, I have employed a man to assist the Indians in cultivating the field on the Wabash, which was cleared and cultivated by Philip Dennis last year; the Indians with this man's assistance have raised, it is supposed, at least six hundred bushels of good corn, from this one field, exclusive of what they have raised from ground of their own clearing.*

Many of the oldest of the Eel River and Weas Indians have removed and settled at that place, where they will be followed by the younger branches of their tribes in the ensuing spring."

He adds, "believing, as I do, that the society of Friends are desirous of ameliorating the situation of their Red Brethren in this country, I will take the liberty to observe, that the present is a very favourable time to put in execution their benevolent views, towards the distressed natives of this land, and that much good may be done on the Wabash by sending one or two suitable men to reside among the Indians, and teach them how to raise stock, and cultivate the earth. Witness what Philip Dennis effected among

Notwithstanding there are several other nations, who appear desirous of the assistance and care of Friends, yet, from the limited state of our funds, we have heretofore been under the necessity of confining our aid, principally, to the Miame, Eel River and Weas Indians.

It will be perceived, that during several years of the first labours of the committee, but little progress was made; this may be attributed, in a great measure, to the pernicious effects of ardent spirits amongst them. As soon as the introduction of this great evil into their country was restrained, there was an immediate improvement discoverable, and an almost universal disposition seemed to pervade them, to abandon their former habits of living, and turn to the cultivation of their lands: their progress in civilization has, since then, been much more rapid, than the most sanguine could have expected; and on comparing the condition of these Indian tribes, at the time the last deputation from our committee visited them, with their present situation, we are of opinion, that there is great cause of encouragement for Friends to persevere in the benevolent work they have undertaken, and strong ground to hope that our labours will, in the end, be crowned with the desired success.

When we reflect on the gradual, but continued decrease of these people, from the time the Europeans first visited this continent, until the present, and the many whole tribes, of which not any trace now remains, except their *names*, there is every reason to believe, that, should the Indians continue to pursue their former mode of life, a few centuries more, many other whole nations of them will become entirely extinct.

Impressed with this melancholy consideration, it must be a prospect truly gladdening to the enlightened christian mind, to survey the hastening of that day, when this part of the human family, weaned from savage habits, and allured by the superior advantages of civil life, shall exchange the tomahawk and scalping knife for the *plough* and the *hoe*; and instead of ranging the forests in seeming affinity to the wild beasts of the desert, shall peacefully and rationally enjoy the productions of the *fruitful field!* Nor is this all; added to the cultivation of the earth, the first step in the view of the committee, towards many other important *temporal* advantages, to be derived to this people from civil life, may not the promotion of this concern, which has thus far evidently prospered, *prepare for* and prove *the means* under the divine blessing, through which, may finally spread and prevail amongst these, our fellow men, that light and knowledge, which so eminently distinguish the true Christian?

Signed on behalf of the committee on Indian concerns, appointed by the Yearly Meeting of Baltimore.

PHILIP E. THOMAS, *Clk.*

Baltimore, 11th Mo. 1805.

among them the last year. At a station where he had every thing to begin, there are now at least 400 hogs and twenty cows, and the Indians at no village in this country live so comfortably, as those at that place. If this spirit of industry is kept alive for a few years, it will certainly have a powerful influence upon the minds of the Indians at many of the neighbouring villages. The Indians have lately concluded a treaty with the United States, which has settled all their jarring interests."

FOREIGN.

Some Extracts from the Diary of the United Brethren's Mission among the Hottentots, at Bavianskloof, 1806.

January 1st. Our church was completely filled, partly by great numbers of Christian strangers, Hottentots, and slaves. Many of them declared afterwards their thanks for the blessing conferred upon them on this occasion.

6th. Being Epiphany, we had hoped to have celebrated this festival

val in peace, and had postponed the holy communion, which ought to have been held on December 28th, to this day, with a view to give it more solemnity. Thirteen adults and two children were to have been baptized. But, alas! the events of yesterday put a stop to all these transactions for the present. Among those to be baptized were six men, two of whom are now on their march to the army. The women are grieved about the loss of their husbands, and the minds of all our people were more or less in a state of agitation. We therefore had only a solemn meeting with the aged or infirm men, and the women and children, who had staid at home, in which we communicated to them the history of the day, from the scriptures, and thanked our Saviour in fervent prayer for the mercy he had likewise shown to the heathen in this country. We likewise fervently commended those of our people, who are now gone to the Cape, to his merciful preservation in soul and body, as they may perhaps be even called upon to face an enemy. Nor did we omit to offer up our supplications for our other missions in every part of the world, and for all our congregations in Europe and America. The powerful sense we had of the Lord's presence with us filled our hearts with peace and comfort.

8th. Being the anniversary of laying the foundation stone of our church, seven years ago, and of its consecration the year following, we resolved to celebrate it with all our people present, and to have the baptismal transaction, intended for the sixth. This solemn act took place at three o'clock, when four men, seven women, and a child, were baptized into the death of Jesus; two of the men, who were to have received baptism, were at the Cape. In the evening we partook of the Lord's supper. Our merciful God fulfilled his gracious promise unto us, so that in the midst of tribulation we had peace in him.

19th. The whole country was refreshed by a plentiful shower. The drought has been so great, that not only all the grass in the fields is withered, but we could hardly keep the fruits in our garden alive. Our mill had stopped for want of water, and we were obliged to send our corn elsewhere to be ground. We offered up public thanksgiving in the Litany for this most seasonable relief. Two Hottentot soldiers, belonging to Schwellendam, came hither to-day, one of whom was wounded, having a ball in his shoulder blade yet unextracted. They begged leave to rest here a few days. A child was baptized to-day, by brother Marsveld, at the earnest request of its parents.

20th. The rain continued very heavy all day. A widow, Mary, departed this life happily. She was baptized by brother Schwinn, in 1804, during a fit of illness, and since that time has walked in communion with our Saviour. The sisters visited her frequently, and were always edified by her conversation. She was once asked, Whether she was afraid to appear in the presence of God? To which she answered, "O no, I rejoice that I shall soon see my Saviour face to face." In this disposition of heart, and full of child like resignation to his will, she continued to her last breath.

23d. One of the baptized, Mark Brongen, departed this life unexpectedly. He had been in the evening meeting, and went apparently in good health to bed. Towards morning he waked his wife, but could not speak to her. She offered him some water, but he was not able to drink it, and soon expired. She came immediately to tell us that he was dead. Supposing that he was only in a fainting fit, we used every means in our power to recover him, but in vain. In the afternoon his body began to swell, and it was supposed that he was killed by the poison he frequently swallowed, to keep himself in readiness to help others; for he was the most skilful practitioner here, in the art of curing people bitten by serpents and other venomous creatures. To be able to do this, they accustom themselves to take poison; and thus can bear a great dose without harm. His loss will be severely felt in this particular,

lar, as he was very successful in his practice.

30th. To-day we yielded to the pressing request of fourteen Hottentots, and permitted them to live on our land. We represented to them, that unless they sincerely meant to believe in the gospel, and devote themselves to our Saviour, they would find the rules of a christian congregation intolerable, and not be able to live in conformity to what the word of God demands. But they persisted, and said, that they had no other view, but to be truly converted to Jesus, and could not again mix with the heathen.

31st. We had a conference to consider of the state of all our people, having spoken with each of the communicants and baptized. We rejoiced to find that the Holy Spirit continues to explain to them, more and more, the things of God; and even such of whom we have hitherto believed, that they did not bestow much thought upon themselves, seem to have been awakened anew. They acknowledge their sins, and total depravity by nature, and long to become partakers of salvation, through the blood of Jesus: that he loved them unto death, and shed his blood to redeem them, is a doctrine precious to their souls. For that mercy, that he sent his word to them also, they express the greatest gratitude. Some declared their earnest desire to be restored to their first love, and their sorrow that they should so little show their sense of our Saviour's love to them in their whole walk, &c.

February 1st. We partook of the Lord's supper. Eight Hottentots were spectators, previous to confirmation next month, and seven as candidates. It was to us all a season of much comfort and refreshment.

6th. The sisters were all employed in drying peaches. It is remarkable, that this year the baboons have not descended from the mountains to visit our garden, which they always used to do in troops. Having been frequently fired upon, they seem to forsake us, and to visit the crops of our neighbours, on the other side of the hills. But we have suffered more than ever from various sorts of vermin, caterpillars, locusts, and a species of ground fleas, which, if not prevented, devour all kinds of garden-stuff quite to the ground. There is likewise a bird not unlike a starling, which does much mischief, by picking the fruit from the trees, and flying off with it. They are particularly fond of figs and grapes, and are very bold, always returning immediately, though one or more of the party are shot.

9th. We had a large proportion of white people at church. Last night one of our women met with a very providential escape. She was lying asleep, when a large serpent waked her by crawling across her face and body. She lay quite still, fearing to stir, till the animal had retreated, without injuring her. She now came, and expressed great thankfulness to God for her preservation, in which we cordially joined.

March 1st. Two men and two women obtained leave to live on our land.

2d. We read the governor's letter to our congregation. Five children were baptized to-day. We also had the pleasure to receive a letter from the Lutheran minister at Capetown. He writes:

"I return you many thanks for the loan of the minutes of the conference of Lutheran and other ministers at Hernhut. It gave me very great joy to perceive by them, that things are not quite so bad, in respect to the Christian religion in Germany, as I had been led to fear; and I even hope, that it may grow better, if but each of us, instead of watching the failings of others, were sincerely bent upon following the injunction of the apostle, "So run that ye may obtain;" and if we did not sit idle in that sphere of action, which is appointed to each of us. May God bless you with his grace, and with health, and strengthen you and your faithful brethren at *Gnadenthal;*" (a name given by governor Jansen to the particular place at Baviaanskloof, where the brethren and their people dwell, meaning the Vale of Grace) "I respect them highly

highly, and entreat you to commend me to their remembrance and prayers."

7th. An aged Hottentot, called Wildboy, came to one of the Missionaries, and addressed him thus: "It is high time that I tell you my whole heart. Our Saviour has a company here at Baviansklooof; they are *his* children. The devil has likewise a company, and they belong to *him*. Among the latter, I am the oldest at Baviansklooof: but I tell you now, that I will no longer be the oldest of the devil's company, but I will come and be the youngest in our Saviour's company." On inquiring how long he had been here and heard the gospel, he answered, "Above ten years." Q. Have you not heard that Jesus is come as a Saviour, offering salvation to all poor sinners? A. "Yes, I have. It is that very word that follows me every where; and I believe that Jesus is greater than the devil: therefore I bid farewel to the devil's company, and beg you and your brethren to think of me before the Lord Jesus, that he may have mercy upon me, and prepare me to be a candidate for baptism." He was shortly after added to the candidates.

26th. We were informed that a Hottentot man, called William Brongen, who formerly lived here, but on account of his worse than heathenish conduct and murderous designs against his own brother, was sent away, had fallen from his waggon near Capetown, and both wheels passing over his body, he was so much hurt, that he lost his life. However, the Lord, in mercy, granted him time and grace to repent: he confessed his sins and cried for pardon; saying, that he deserved it all. The sudden death of his brother Mark, (January 23d) had greatly disturbed his mind; and his conscience being now awakened, he turned with prayer and tears to the Lord for mercy. We trust, he has been snatched as a brand out of the burning. His father was present, and was commissioned by him to tell us, how sorry he was for the grief his bad conduct had put us to, and that he earnestly begged our forgiveness.

27th. A Hottentot couple was married in our church.

April 1. A slave, living about three day's journey from hence, sent us a dollar, desiring that we might distribute it among the cripples and lame people. This man is earnestly seeking for salvation, and has frequently been here. He used to stay during the whole of Passion-Week, but is now prevented from coming by illness. He begged us to pray for him. The Passion-Week was celebrated in the manner usual among us; and on Maunday-Thursday, we partook, in the holy communion, of the Lord's body broken, and his blood shed for us, for the remission of sins; remembering with heartfelt compunction, the bitter agony and death of our Saviour. Several were present as spectators, and one was re-admitted.

In the evening, some visitors confirmed the news we had already heard, that it had pleased the Lord to take home to himself our venerable friend Mr. Schmidt, at Capetown. He was near eighty-four years old, and always approved himself as a most faithful and hospitable friend to our missionaries.

May 4th. A Hottentot woman, who lives about an hour's walk from hence, came to us, having just recovered a little from a very heavy illness. She expressed her earnest desire to find peace and pardon with God: and added, "O pray for and think of me, for I assure you, that nothing but the anguish of my mind, could have made me creep hither in my weak state of body."

14th. To-day, one of our baptized Hottentots, Philip Titus, departed this life happily. He was baptized the 2d of April, 1804, by brother Marsveld: and we are able to declare, that, from that time, he approved himself as a child of God, by which he not only gained the esteem of his countrymen, but was much respected by the neighbouring farmers, one of whom supplied him with necessaries during his illness. Towards the end of last year he was afflicted with a dropsical complaint, and suffered much pain. All of us visited

visited him frequently, and endeavoured to apply every thing in our power to mitigate his sufferings. We always found him humble, yet full of joy and peace, steadfastly looking to Jesus, and rejoicing in the prospect of a happy eternity in the presence of his Redeemer. But great as our satisfaction in regard to this dear man was, so great was our grief on account of the conduct of his wife Rachel, who not only neglected her poor, helpless husband in his illness, but even ran off with a Dutch deserter. About eight days before her husband's decease, she returned, and entreated his forgiveness for her unfaithful conduct. He assured her of the same; after which, to the surprise of all our people, she tended and nursed him with the greatest assiduity. Shortly before his departure, one of the missionaries was called, who offered up a fervent prayer, commending his dear-bought soul to his God and Redeemer. Mention being made in the prayer of his wife and children, who were commended to the mercy and protection of our Heavenly Father, the poor, disconsolate woman began to weep, groan, and tremble all over. Before the missionary had concluded, his soul went over into a blissful eternity, his wife closed his eyes amidst loud weeping. God grant that her repentance may proceed to real conversion of heart.

In these days we spoke with all our communicants. One of them said, "I used to feel much malice against others, and found that thereby I lost sight of our Saviour and suffered damage in my soul; but since I have had the grace given me, to know that this is a great sin, I call upon our Saviour to help and deliver me from it, and he has changed my disposition." [*Evan. Intel.*

EXECUTION OF MURDERERS,

And the calamitous Event which attended it.

On Monday, Feb. 23, John Holloway and Owen Haggerty, who had been convicted on the 21st, of the murder of Mr. Steele on Hounslow Heath, in Nov. 1802, were brought out to execution on the platform before Newgate. As soon as Holloway ascended the scaffold, he exclaimed aloud, "I am innocent, innocent, by G—d!" and then turning round to another part of the crowd, he cried, "Innocent, innocent, innocent, gentlemen! No verdict, no verdict, no verdict, gentlemen! Innocent, innocent!" The cap was then drawn over his face. Owen Haggerty looked downward, and was silent; he made no public acknowledgment either of guilt or innocence.

At the same time was executed, Elizabeth Godfrey, a woman of the town, for the murder of Edward Prince, by stabbing him in the eye, on the 25th of December last, with a large clasp knife: in consequence of which, he languished until the 18th of January, and then died. She behaved with decency.

The execution of three murderers attracted the public notice in a very unusual degree. The crowd was collecting most of the night. At break of day, the streets leading to Newgate were filled with people, rushing to behold the awful spectacle; and about seven o'clock the whole street was closely filled with spectators. The pressure was exceedingly increased in consequence of a line of carts and coaches reaching from Newgate Street to Skinner Street, and thereby excluding from the view of the gallows all the persons occupying the large space at the bottom of Giltspur Street; this induced multitudes to press down the Old Bailey from the corner of Skinner Street. Before the moment of the execution, just after 8 o'clock; the sufferings of many persons became extreme, and the danger of suffocation very great. When the criminals appeared, there was a general cry of "Hats off! Hats off!" an attempt to comply with which increased the pressure. It was at this awful moment that several persons fell; others were unavoidably thrown down upon them, and others

again

again upon them. The shrieks of the sufferers, and the screams of murder! murder! were inexpressibly dreadful; but no assistance could be afforded. Those who were suffocated, or crushed to death, remained for half an hour, or more, before they could be removed. As soon as the crowd began to withdraw, a most dreadful scene presented itself. Twenty-seven dead bodies were taken to St. Bartholomew's hospital; two to St. Sepulchre's church, and a few others to different places. More than *thirty persons* certainly perished.

The coroner's inquest examined minutely into the whole affair; the result of which is under the consideration of the city, who will doubtless adopt some method to prevent a similar disaster in future. We sincerely hope that all carriages will be strictly prohibited, for we are persuaded the mischief arose chiefly from them.

This catastrophe is extremely affecting! The death of so many persons in perfect health, and at an unexpected hour, when curiosity prompted to behold the death of others, and who were thus precipitated into the eternal world, is peculiarly distressing to humanity, and affords a fresh comment on that striking sentence, "In the midst of life we are in death!"

[*Evan. Mag.*

Obituary.

An Account of the Conversion and Exercises of Mrs. Abbe Ward, of ——, in the County of Essex, New Jersey, written by herself.

"FROM my youth up, I had checks of conscience, remorse and anxiety concerning a future state; but none of these proved permanent. Having a pious father to instruct me, I was often constrained to form resolutions to attend to the things of religion; but found that I had no heart to execute my purposes. It pleased God to send upon me great afflictions in a married state; yet experience proved that the greatest trials could not subdue my proud, unsanctified heart. It required as great an effort of omnipotent power, as to create a world from nothing.

Sometimes I used to be greatly troubled with the suggestion, that if I was one of the elect, I should be saved; if not, there was no help for me, do what I might. At other times my mind was distressed with an apprehension that I had committed the unpardonable sin; and then it would be suggested, that all my fears and concerns would avail nothing. It appears to me that Satan was suffered to use any artifice in his power to lead me to eternal ruin.

Thus did I live, (with deep humiliation I desire to speak it) in hardness of heart and blindness of mind, yielding to the suggestions of Satan, and led captive at his will, until I arrived at the age of fifty. Being then in a poor state of health, and unprepared for death and judgment, I thought an interest in Christ of great importance; but my prospect of finding mercy at that age appeared so very small, that I thought God never intended mercy for me. Then would my wicked heart rise against him, his sovereignty, decrees, and laws. The horrid idea would arise in my mind, that if I could get above God, or hide from his presence, it would afford me some relief. But knowing *that* impossible, my anxiety remained, and all things appeared dark and gloomy.

At this time our ever dear and long to be remembered Mr. —— was settled here; for whose pious labours and instructions I hope I shall

shall have reason to bless God through a never ending eternity. Many alarming discourses did I hear from this excellent man, that came like a sword to my heart. One in particular from 1 Kings, xviii. 21. *How long halt ye between two opinions?* On this occasion he made use of such pressing arguments to induce all to accept an offered Saviour immediately, and to be on the Lord's side, that I really thought I longed to be of that happy number. But there appeared an insurmountable difficulty in the way, independent of my own will; for as yet I was unacquainted with the opposition and stubbornness of my heart, which kept me from Christ. And now, being exceedingly depressed in my spirits, I knew not what to do; for my mind was as dark as darkness itself.

One evening, after the family had all retired, (for I was unwilling they should know my anxiety) I opened the Bible, to see if I could find any relief; and the first words which I fell upon were those in Hab. ii. 1—3. These words were set home with such power upon my mind, that I resolved from that time to improve every opportunity to attend on the means of God's appointment, not without some degree of hope that deliverance would come, though I should wait long for it.

Some time after this, I had an interview with Mr. ——, as he was visiting his congregation. He asked me some questions concerning the state of my mind, and whether I entertained a hope that I had made my peace with God. I confessed to him that I did not; but Oh! how did it grieve my heart, at this age, to be without hope and without God in the world. I gave him to understand something of the anxiety of my mind, although, before this, I had scarcely ever divulged it to my nearest friend. He gave me some good advice, accompanied with encouragement, and exhorted me no longer to reject the offers of salvation. He said that the time had now come for me to seek in earnest the salvation of my soul. At this time there was a great revival of religion in the congregation; and God was awakening and hopefully bringing many precious souls to himself. His words, I have often thought, were to me like *apples of gold in pictures of silver.** And

* *As she lay upon her dying bed, near five years afterwards, she gave the compiler of this narrative the following account: that previously to the above mentioned interview, she had supposed herself too far advanced in years to obtain mercy, but that something which Mr. —— said to her on that occasion, encouraged her to set out in earnest to seek salvation. Within a day or two after this, being informed of an interview which Mr. —— had taken pains to obtain with a young man, with a view to his spiritual benefit, she was much affected, and retiring to her room cast herself on her bed. Here God revealed himself to her. She told me that she could not have thought it possible for God to reveal so many things to a mind in so short a time. She saw a highway paved to God and to the throne of grace by Christ. She saw her sins as she never saw them before. She did not know how God would dispose of* her *in a future world; yet she was so full of joy in the view of God and Christ, that the transport seemed too much for her nature to sustain. At length she arose, and was led by a secret, irresistible influence to the Bible, which lay in a part of the room; breaking out, and saying, as she approached it, "The Lord is my rock; in him will I trust." She opened to the Psalms. Whatever she read appeared new, and to contain a meaning which she was now able to understand. The first two verses of the 18th Psalm, in particular, were so sweet to her that she could not rest till she had prevailed on Mr. —— to make them the theme of a sermon. She did not wish to read those passages which spoke of* enemies; *for she felt that she was no one's enemy, and had no enemy herself. It became her custom, when she found a passage of scripture peculiarly precious and weighty, to mark the place by*

And now, being entered on my fifty third year, on Thursday, the 8th day of July, 1802, (O amazing grace and condescension!) I humbly hope I found deliverance. God was pleased at this time, in a peculiar manner, to set my sins in order before me. From my youth up my life appeared to have been polluted with sins, which seemed like mountains of insupportable weight. I saw before me an awful gulf, a bottomless pit, and discovered my great exposedness to God's everlasting wrath. I beheld God seated on a throne of justice; a holy, just, sinhating God. I could now take all shame and blame to myself. I saw myself such a dreadful sinner, that my mouth was completely shut. I saw no way of escape; but surrendered myself *unconditionally* into the hands of God, not knowing his will concerning me. Sin now appeared in all its odious colours. I saw that God could justly send me to the lowest hell. All my past prayers and performances appeared so selfish and polluted, that I wished them removed as far from me as the east is from the west.

All my wicked objections against the sovereignty of God and his eternal decrees were removed. Oh! what a sweet trust and reliance on the mercy of God in Christ did I now experience. My dreadful load of guilt was entirely gone; and instead of being sentenced to everlasting misery, I found myself encircled in a Saviour's arms. I now saw how God could be just in justifying such a sinner; that through the complete atonement and righteousness of Christ our head, I should be presented faultless before the Father, *without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.* Heaven was represented to my view as a place of spotless purity, where nothing shall ever enter that defileth, a habitation for holy saints and angels. The sting of death, which had formerly been such a terror to me, was entirely taken away; and the only reason why I now desired to live was, that I might render some little service to my God and Saviour, in promoting his kingdom and interest in the world. There appeared such a fulness and willingness in Christ to receive all that would come to him, that I was astonished that I had so long refused to come. Oh! how did I long that poor sinners might come and taste and see that the Lord was gracious. With what detestation did I now look upon my past life and my misimprovement of precious time! How did my tears flow! tears, I hope, of humble contrition for my many abuses of such a God! a God of strict justice, holiness, and purity, that would by no means clear the guilty; yet full of compassion, ready to forgive all who put their trust in him. A sweet calm ensued, and something like a still small voice speaking peace to my soul. I could not refrain from rapturous praises, saying, *the Lord is my rock, in him will I trust.*

All this time I was in doubt what these things meant. Can it be possible, said I, that this can be a change of heart? It is too much! too great a thing! Yet I must praise God; I must trust in him; I must love and adore his great name.

My heart now delighted much in reading the fifth chapter of the Revelation, where the angels are represented as standing around the throne, "Saying, with a loud voice, worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature

by introducing a thread between the leaves. And so many passages were set home upon her heart, that her threads became insensibly multiplied, until in a short time she found, to her surprise, as many as forty places marked in this manner. She enjoyed seasons of very high communion with God. In a society, one evening, she enjoyed more happiness in a few minutes, (as she confidently informed me in her last sickness) than she had enjoyed in fifty years of sin. But it is better to hear the account of her conversion from her own lips.

creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I, saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb forever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth forever and ever." I thought it was no wonder that they were unable to *stand*; for who, that does behold only a *glimpse* of his glory, is able to stand before him?

The holy scriptures now appeared in a different light from what they had ever done before. I was much delighted in reading the Psalms of David. There seemed such a sweet, refreshing food in them, that I had a longing desire to join the dear Psalmist in praising, trusting, and rejoicing in the Lord; saying, "I will love thee, O Lord, my strength. The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." Psalm xviii. 1, 2.

I know not how better to express my thankfulness than in the words of Maria De Fleury:

"Thy sovereign grace, Spirit divine, I sing;
Fountain of holiness, of life and love!
Great glorifier of a Saviour's name;
Revealer of the hidden things of God.
Thy new creating voice bade me awake
From nature's sleep, the dreadful sleep of sin,
To all the joys of light and life divine;
To all the bliss of immortality!
Of pardon'd sin, and fellowship with God,
Through the rich streams of a Redeemer's blood,
Of sin subdued, and a triumphant hope
Of the bright glories of eternity.
Come, holy Comforter! descend and dwell
In my cold heart; warm it with heavenly fire;
Make it thy temple, tune my stamm'ring tongue
To lofty notes of praise, such as thy love
Deserves, O ever blessed Trinity,
One undivided glorious Deity;
One self existent and eternal God,
My Father, Saviour, everlasting Friend.
Let every power of my redeemed soul
Be dedicate to thee; let every pulse
Beat high for thee, and every breath aspire
In grateful hallelujahs to my God."

The following was added during her last illness:

"Many passages of scripture which I formerly had passed over with neglect have since filled my heart with love and admiration. For instance, when our blessed Saviour, speaking to the woman of Samaria with so much mildness, tells her that the water that he would give to believers, should be in them a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Everlasting life! How much is contained in those precious words! how exceedingly rich his promises! Not only are we delivered from death eternal, but we are made kings and priests forever unto God, heirs of the inheritance of the saints in light, partakers of that weight of glory; that exceeding weight of glory!—where sin and sorrow shall never come, where all tears shall be wiped away! and all this of his self moving compassion! Well might the apostle cry out, "O! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

I have

I have often had very pleasing reflections on being so nearly allied to our blessed Saviour, as to be a member of his body. The words "I am the vine, ye are the branches," appeared great and glorious beyond expression. Many other texts I intended to have mentioned, and also my public covenanting with God, together with the many conflicts that I have had with indwelling sin: but as I am now lying on a bed of sickness, in all probability near my journey's end, and not able to write myself, I must pass these things over in silence. For these three or four years past, I have been most earnest in my supplications to the Almighty God that he would be with me in my last hours; that I might not meet death with surprise; that he would lift upon me, in that hour, the light of his blessed countenance; that if I have not glorified him in my life, I may in my death: and may God of his infinite mercy grant this, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

These were the last words she ever wrote. The person to whom she committed the above paper has the satisfaction to remark, that this last prayer was not left unanswered. The desire to glorify God in her death, "if she had not in her life," was much in her heart and on her lips. During the whole of her confinement, she had those clear, discriminating views, that exquisite sense of sin, that deep abasement, that fear and love of God, that dread of false motives in conversation, and that supporting and even triumphant view of Christ, which rendered her conversation very impressive and instructive. It caused the distinguishing truths of religion, and the deep feelings of experimental godliness to appear as *realities*, and gave convincing proof of their existence. To go into her room, was to get into a new world; the change was as great, as from a careless congregation into one full of the Holy Ghost.

She had always experienced a constitutional dread of the *pangs* of a gradual death. In the early stages of her sickness, she was beset with the apprehension of protracted sufferings, and feared that her patience would not endure the test. God delivered her from what she feared. After she had become mostly confined to her bed, she expressed great gratitude that she had descended so near to the grave with so little suffering. She was surprised to find that she had endured no more. She could not call it *pain*, it was so easy to bear it with the patience given her. It was even rendered "sweet" by the reflection that "it was carrying her *home*." The thoughts of home, she said, often made her actually forget her sufferings. "I am sometimes in pain," said she, "without seeming to know it." She panted for a world of everlasting purity. When reminded that she was going to her pious *parents*, she seemed not to regard it, but replied with emotion, "I am going, I hope, to a place where there is *no sin*." The thought of recovering her health and returning into the world was very distressing to her. She earnestly desired to depart and to be with Christ. In the beginning of March, she asked one who stood by her, whether he thought she should see the end of that month. Being answered in the negative, she replied with peculiar emphasis, "O! I *do* rejoice when I hear people say so." The time of her departure was, however, more remote. Her life gradually ebbed, without any abatement of her patience, till the 22d of May, 1807; when she died, we trust, *to live forever*. [*Evan. Int.*

CHARACTER OF MR. O. SPAULDING.

"Let him, who has tears, be prepared to weep."

DROWNED, in Connecticut river, on the 29th July last, Mr. OLIVER SPAULDING, in the 22d year of his age, son of Mr. Phinehas Spaulding of Jaffrey, and member of the junior class of Dartmouth college. The circumstances of his death were the following: On the day of his

his decease, he, with several of the students of college, went to the river for the purpose of bathing: Mr. Spaulding, being not much accustomed to swimming, and getting accidentally into the depth and current of the stream, sunk and went to the bottom; where he is supposed to have lain six or seven minutes before those, who were present, could find him; when he was taken out and brought to the shore, where all the assistance, which medical skill and tender affection could administer, was applied for an hour and a half; but, alas; all was vain! his Creator had summoned his soul into the world of spirits. Whether he was seized by a fit or some other disorder, that he could not be resuscitated, is uncertain; but too true, it is, Dartmouth saw one of her fairest and worthiest sons slumber in death, while she is doomed to lament his sad and untimely fate.

"*And is he no more,*"—

He, who so lately seemed the candidate for unrivalled usefulness? Possessed of a vigorous and strong constitution, he was active, sprightly, and persevering. To a sound mind and brilliant talents, he added unremitted application, which enabled him to make rapid proficiency in his studies. Nor was he less esteemed for his private virtues, than for his splendid abilities. Moral and exemplary in his conduct, he was an amiable companion, a faithful friend, and dutiful son. Esteemed by his instructors, and beloved by his classmates and acquaintances, with deep regret, they lament his sudden and untimely departure. In him society has lost a valuable member, Dartmouth is robbed of a blooming flower, and his relatives are deprived of a worthy son and brother. Then let us mingle with them the tears of sympathy, condole in their afflictions, and assauge the grief which pierce their swelling bosom. Though their fondest expectations have been suddenly blighted, may they not repine at the will of God; but remember, "when he commands we must obey."

The deceased was interred with that respect, which the solemnity of the occasion demanded. The corpse being carried into the meeting-house, where a prayer being made, an appropriate eulogy on the death of the deceased was pronounced by his classmate, Mr. Ichabod Bartlett.

Thus, O sons of Dartmouth! you have seen one of your number, in the bloom of youth, snatched from you, and committed to the silent dust. No more shall you lock with him the arm of friendship, no longer wander with him over the fields of science. To you it is a loud call; it is the voice of God, which bids you be virtuous and wise, that when you are called from hence, you may be prepared to join the grand assembly of the blessed."

Poetry.

TO MY SOUL.

Poor hapless, helpless, hopeless thing,
Say, what is thy desire,
Since all the flow'rs that grace the spring,
And all that summer seasons bring,
Can nought of joy inspire!

Dost thou for riches vainly sigh?
Or honour's empty show?
Or dost thou look with envious eye
On those by pow'r exalted high
Above the crowd below?

Can these, e'en all of them combin'd,
In all their varied forms,
Afford contentment to the mind,
For immortality design'd,
Midst life's tempestuous storms?

Ah, no! 'tis Friendship's generous glow
And sympathizing eye
That constitute our bliss below!
No greater boon can Heav'n bestow
On mortals doom'd to die!

Grant me, my God, this one request,
And I will ask no more!
Oh let me, with thy friendship blest,
Enjoy in thee that heav'nly rest
To which my wishes soar!

J. D.